



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

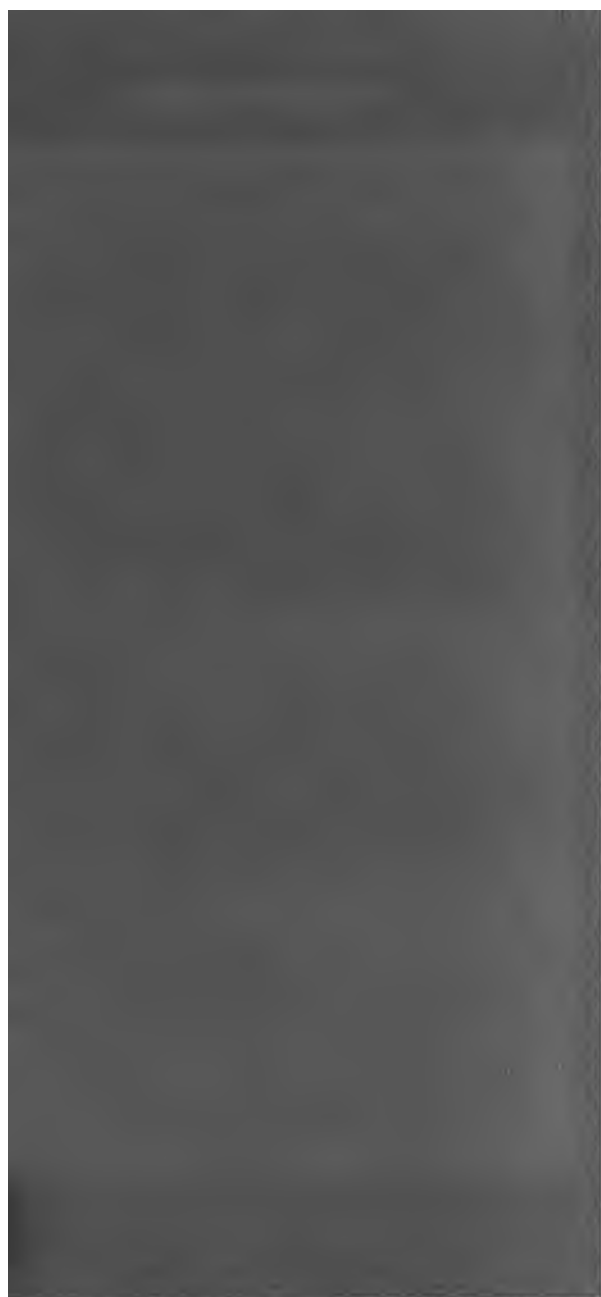
NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07484819 7

The
Gordon Lester Ford
Collection
Presented by his Sons
Winthrop Chauncy Ford
and
Paul Leicester Ford
to the
New York Public Library.





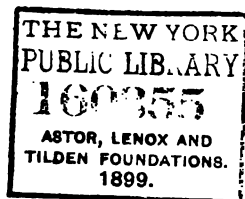
7

GLIMPSES
OF
HOME LIFE;
OR,
CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES.

BY
MRS. EMMA C. EMBURY.

NEW-YORK:
J. C. RIKER, 129 FULTON-STREET.

MDCCCXLVIII.



ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1848,

By JOHN C. RIKER,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New-York.

JOY WEBB
OLIVER
BARTON

LEAVITT, TROW & Co. Prs.,

33 Ann street.



Glimpses of Home Life.



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Marriage, ...	9
Flora Lester ; or, Scenes in the Life of a Belle, ...	34
The One Fault, ...	72
The Lady's Lesson ; or, How to Lose a Lover, ...	91
Fortune-Hunting ; or, The Heiress, ...	109
Faith Templeton, ...	130
The Mistaken Choice ; or, Three Years of Married Life, .	145
Love at First Sight, ...	164
Wilfulness ; or, the Wife's Tale, ...	187
Money-Making ; or, Success not always Happiness, . . .	210
The Mother and Daughter, ...	231
The Village Bride, ...	246
Manœuvring ; or, the Doctor's Visit, ...	270
The First and Second Wife ; or, the Confessions of a Discontented Man, ...	287



P R E F A C E .

THE volume now offered to the public is a *first* attempt at collecting and classing the author's numerous contributions to various periodicals. A far greater diversity of subjects might have been chosen ; but, as utility is one of the essential requisites of popular fiction, at the present day, a selection has been made from those tales only which have a decided practical tendency, or a direct bearing upon domestic life. If these sketches receive the same favor from the general reader that they met with in the pages of the magazines, they may, at some future time, be followed by a second series. That they may not be found to resemble inferior garden flowers, which though admitted for the sake of variety into a rich bouquet, are worthless in themselves, is a hope which a writer so long conversant with the public may perhaps be allowed to indulge, without incurring the charge of arrogance or assumption.

BROOKLYN, May 8, 1848.



GLIMPSES OF HOME LIFE.

MARRIAGE.

Balthazar.—"Nay, nay; all marriages are made in Heaven.

Benedict.—Trust me, not so—if some descend from Jove,
Many spring up from earth; and, sooth to say,
Not few are tinkered in the sulphury realms
Where Pluto holds his court.

Balthazar.—How prove you this?

Benedict.—Right easily: three powers are there which win
Mankind to noose themselves in wedlock's bands;
When Eros binds the soul in gentle chains
Heaven smiles upon the vow; while Earth puts forth
For Anteros its fading, fragile flowers;
But Hell itself sends forth its pitchy flames
When Pluto leads th' unwilling votary."

Old Play.

"Look what a magnificent present I have just received, Cousin Clara, and tell me if Mr. Walmsley is not a most princely suitor." Such was the exclamation with which Eveline Harris entered the apartment of her cousin. Clara quietly raised her eyes from her needlework, and taking the richly enchased box which was proffered to her view, replied: "It is really very pretty—a work-box I suppose?"

"A work-box, indeed!" exclaimed Eveline, "no, no; the casket, pretty as you may think it, is scarcely worthy of its contents!" As she spoke, she touched a

spring, and Clara almost started at the dazzling brilliancy of the gems which flashed before her eyes.

"Did you ever see such splendid diamonds?" cried Eveline.

"You surely do not intend to accept them, Eveline?" exclaimed Clara.

"Indeed I do : only look at the exquisite taste of the setting;" and with these words, the gay girl drew from the box a superb bandeau, which she carelessly twined in her long curls as she turned to the mirror to observe their effect.

"Take care what you do, Eveline," said Clara gravely; "you may pay too high a price for these costly jewels."

"What do you mean, coz?"

"Do not pretend to misunderstand me; you cannot with propriety accept so valuable a gift, unless you intend also to accept the hand of the donor; and surely in that case you would buy them at the cost of happiness."

"Really you are very complimentary, Clara; it seems to me, that youth and health, good temper and fortune, are not such very despicable ingredients in the cup of life."

"Listen to me without displeasure, Eveline; you are gifted with talent and with beauty, education has improved the faculties of your mind, and society has added elegance of manner to your native charms. Mr. Walmsley is four years your junior, and nature has been to him a most niggard step-dame; since, to an insignificant person, she has connected an exceedingly weak mind. Even his better qualities serve to render

him ridiculous, for his extreme good temper makes him the butt of his associates, while his profuse generosity subjects him to the continual impositions of the knavish and designing. He has too many virtues to deserve contempt, and too many weaknesses to command respect."

"You are a faithful limner, coz; Master Simeon Walmsley is all that you have depicted; and yet, notwithstanding his juvenility and his imbecility, Eveline Harris is his future bride. Don't start, Clara; the affair was all settled last evening;—he wears my turquoise ring, and I suppose these diamonds are to be considered as his 'troth-pledge.'"

"Eveline, you are jesting."

"I am speaking the words of sober truth, coz."

"Can it be possible that the pure proud nature of Eveline Harris has become so sullied by communion with the world, that she can sell herself for baubles like these?" exclaimed Clara, vehemently. "I have seen the time when the mere thought would have been spurned as an insult."

"I know all you would say, Clara; you think me enamored of Walmsley's wealth, and you are right, but my motives are not so selfish as you suppose. You know my father's high-toned feelings, and the difficulty which he has had in sustaining such an appearance in society, as could satisfy his family pride. That difficulty increases every day, and we must soon stoop from our proud eminence, or we must find some new method of resistance to the pressure of poverty. I am now five-and-twenty, and three younger sisters yet remain to be provided for; so that there is no other re-

source for us than wealthy marriages. Papa has never urged me to marry, but he has had his eye upon Mr Walmsley ever since he entered college; and he has taken care to wind around him the light but firm bonds of habit, by accustoming him to the attentions of our family. A few days ago, papa came to me with a volume of Dante in his hand, and bade me read attentively a passage which he had marked. It contained the advice given by the poet to a certain noble duke respecting the marriage of a daughter. 'Marry the eldest advantageously, even if you mortgage all your estate to do so, and then all the others will reap the benefit of her position.' Strange counsel from the Poet of Heaven and Hell, was it not, Clara? I pondered long over the thoughts which the book had excited, for I understood papa's wishes the moment I read the passage, and could not but admire the delicate mode which his elegant taste had suggested as the best means of making me acquainted with them. Last evening, when young Walmsley entered, I perceived a restlessness in his manner which foreboded something unusual; and at length, when by the management of papa, we were left alone, he blundered out the momentous proposition. He was all confusion, and I all self-possession—for a moment I hesitated, but my eye fell upon the book which lay upon the table, and that decided me. He is not exactly the beau-ideal of my fancy, but I have the satisfaction of knowing, that the sacrifice of my own feelings will purchase the welfare of my family."

"And do you really believe, Eveline, that you have been perfectly disinterested in your motives? Did no vision of grandeur heretofore unattainable, of wealth

almost unbounded, of triumphs over rival belles, flit across your fancy? Did not ambition whisper, that wealth is power?"

"Clara, I will not pretend to more virtue than I possess. I have lived long enough in society to be fully acquainted with the value which is set upon fortune, and I should be as wretched *now* with 'love in a cottage,' as I might have been in my joyous girlhood from the anticipation of a destiny like the present. The truth is, that I have outlived the age of romance, if indeed I ever possessed it. Mr. Walmsley's wealth will place me at once upon an eminence which many are painfully toiling to reach; it will enable me to sustain the falling fortunes of my family, to marry my sisters to advantage, and to gratify my father's ambition. Are you satisfied, coz?"

"Far from it, Eveline; you know not your own character, or you would never subject yourself to the torture which you will now be called to endure. You are proud and sensitive to a fault—jealous of ridicule, and shrinking from any thing which can in the slightest degree wound your self-love; yet you are now about to marry a man who will be the means of inflicting daily pangs upon your susceptible feelings."

"You do not give him credit for his truly amiable temper, Clara."

"I do, I do, Eveline; if, with your eyes open to all its consequences, you allow this marriage, you merit all the unhappiness which must inevitably result from it; but poor Walmsley doubtless loves you, and believes you bestow a reciprocal affection; to him, therefore, the suffering will be severe and unmerited."

"Do you suppose I shall be fool enough to let him discover his mistake, Clara? No, no; he is not very acute in his perceptions; and as I really estimate his goodness of heart, it will not be difficult to treat him with such kindness, as may be easily mistaken for a warmer feeling."

"You deceive yourself, my dear cousin; before marriage it may require but little artifice to make the counterfeit coin pass current for the pure gold of true affection; but, depend upon it, the close observation of wedded life soon discovers the cheat."

"You and I, Clara, differ very widely in our ideas of that mystery called love. For my part, I have no faith in its existence:

'The mind hath made it, as it peopled Heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy.'

I have had many a passing fancy, and have awakened many a transient passion in the hearts of others, but I have never felt a spark of that ardent, devoted love, of which maidens dream and poets sing."

"It is not too late for you to experience it yet, Eveline."

"Yes, my time is past for all 'youth's phantasies,' all my 'opium dreams' of romance have given place to more substantial visions. I have seen many a love-match degenerate into a union of 'hands not hearts;' and therefore I feel no anxiety about my future destiny. I mean to be a most dutiful and affectionate wife—not from a blind and selfish affection, but from *principle*."

"I have no more to say, Eveline; you seem to have

calculated the chances with a degree of deliberation rather unusual in such cases ; and therefore all further discussion would be useless. When will your marriage take place ?”

“ Oh, as soon as the wedding gear can be prepared ; I hate long engagements.”

“ They give one too much time for reflection you think, Eveline ?”

“ ‘ No more of that an’ thou lovest me, good coz ;’ a truce with your grave lectures, and let us discuss the subject of the toilet.”

“ Do you mean that your diamonds shall form part of your bridal attire ?” asked Clara dryly.

“ What a shocking idea—no, certainly not ; diamonds would be as unsuited to a bride as roses to a great-grand-mother ; the perfection of a wedding dress is elegant simplicity—a single gem upon the brow, a band of snowy pearls to confine the flowing veil, or a delicate spray of orange buds, may be tolerated, but no more.”

Eveline Harris was the spoiled child of the world of fashion. Her father, a man of versatile and brilliant talents, was the idol of society ; but while his votaries fed him with the incense of flattery, he was compelled to keep alive their devotion by lavishing his golden favors among them. His patrimony diminished as his popularity increased ; and at length, he was reduced to practice the thousand expedients which are necessary to the poor and proud slave of appearances. His eldest daughter, who closely resembled him in personal beauty and brilliancy of character, was an object of his especial affection. He saw her the admired of every gay circle, dispensing smiles to all alike, but evincing no disposition

to assume the responsibilities of matrimony; and he rejoiced in this because it ensured to him the continuance of her society at home, while it enabled him to arrange ambitious plans for her future establishment. He had long determined that one of his daughters should marry Simeon Walmsley, who had been left to his guardianship when quite an infant, and whose large estate had increased to an enormous amount during a minority of nearly twenty years. In order to effect this, the young heir was taught to consider Mr. Harris as a second parent, and to look upon the daughters as intimate and confidential friends, even from his boyhood; while, at the same time, his wary guardian took care that his youth should be passed in the safe retirement of a remote village, under pretence of regard for his health. Educated in seclusion, young Walmsley had been studiously preserved from all contagion of evil example. The follies and vices which, in great cities, are learned almost in childhood, were totally unknown to him; and when, at the age of twenty-one, he came into possession of his immense wealth, he was one of the most pure-minded and single-hearted beings in the world. Affectionate in his disposition, generous in his impulses, and kind in all his feelings, he possessed many qualities calculated to awaken regard; but unfortunately, the finer qualities of his character were thrown into the shade by a weakness of intellect almost amounting to imbecility. His mind was, to use a homely simile, like a sieve, it contained only the grosser particles of knowledge. He had acquired, what a certain learned alderman styled the "*the three R's*," but they comprehended nearly all the information with which

his scholastic studies had endowed him. In vain he had been compelled to plod year after year through the field of classic lore—in vain he had been led through the flowery paths of elegant literature—in vain he had been sent to explore the treasures of art in the vast storehouses of Europe. Of his classical studies he only retained a vivid sense of abhorrence—his attainments in the *belles-lettres* only enabled him to yawn through a new novel—and from his foreign tour he only derived a prejudice against all men who could not speak English. Yet, notwithstanding all this, Simeon Walmsley was not designed to be a mere useless incumbrance in social life. His intellect was of the narrowest possible limit, but his moral nature was capable of a very high degree of cultivation; and while his mental powers were evidently far below mediocrity, he gave promise of goodness and virtue far exceeding the ordinary standard of morality. He had no philosophic views of human life, but he believed that God had given him wealth in trust for the welfare of others as well as himself; he therefore determined to do all the good he could, and to avoid, as far as it was possible, all contact with evil. With these simple but correct views, he needed only the aid of a stronger mind and firmer character, to make him one of the noblest of mankind.

Such was the man upon whom the proud, the sensitive, the highly-gifted Eveline Harris had exerted her fascinations, and whom she had voluntarily lured into an affection, which she knew could never be a source of happiness to him. Even when she stood at the altar, her heart grew cold as she uttered the solemn response, for she *knew* that her haughty spirit even then refused

"to honor and obey" her future lord. A feeling almost amounting to contempt arose within her breast, and she unconsciously raised her head proudly, as her eye glanced on the diminutive form of him who placed on her finger the symbolic ring.

Woe unto those who pronounce the awful pledge which binds two immortal souls, when they know that the heart denies the uttered word! If there be a sin, which beyond all others, deserves the fearful punishment denounced against deception by the God of Truth, it is the perjury which desecrates the holy shrine, when a marriage vow is pronounced by the lying lip of the cold, the careless, or the false.

Eveline's ambitious fancies were fully gratified. Immediately after her marriage, she found herself installed in a splendid mansion and surrounded by all the appliances of wealth and luxury. Her husband, elated at the thought of having won the long admired belle of fashionable society, seemed as if he could never repay her condescension. His affectionate temper led him to anticipate her every wish, and he seemed to live but in her presence. With almost foolish fondness he would hang over her chair, and pour forth all the extravagance of his excited feelings as he gazed upon her stately beauty. He loved to be fondled and petted like a child, and if he could but lounge upon a sofa, with his head resting on her lap, while he gazed up into her lovely face with proud and happy tenderness, he was perfectly content. He loved her with all the fervor of an ardent but feeble nature, and the relying, dependent fondness with which he regarded her, was like a characteristic of feminine feeling, rather than like the manly and pro-

tecting affection which we look for in the lover and the husband. To a woman of Eveline's temperament, such evidences of attachment would have been excessively disagreeable even had she loved her husband. She liked to receive homage of a more rational kind, and would have looked with contempt upon any man who was content to share such caresses as might be bestowed upon a pet kitten. She had no patience with what she called his childishness. She had schooled herself to perform all her serious duties as a wife, but she had not reflected upon the minor tasks which are often the most difficult of performance. His constant presence, his unwearied devotion, his foolish fondness, imposed restraints upon her which at last became perfectly intolerable, and she looked forward with impatience to the time when the uxorious bridegroom should be transformed into the careless husband.

And was this her only cause of discontent? my reader will ask. At this early period of her married life it was ; and had she guided aright the feeble mind of her devoted lover, she might have received as well as given happiness. But she possessed too haughty and unaccommodating a spirit. She fancied that by thus allowing herself to seem his idol, she shared the ridicule which she knew his weaknesses drew upon him from those who could more readily sneer at his defects than imitate his virtues. Instead of compelling others to treat him with respect by showing that she thought him worthy of it, she seemed glad to take refuge from his attentions in the unmeaning civilities of those butterflies of fashion who are always ready to flutter round the light of beauty. It soon became a subject of remark, that Mrs.

Walmsley availed herself fully of the convenient fashion which forbids husband and wife to associate together in society. She allowed him to attend her entrance into the ball-room or saloon, but from that moment she became the cynosure of all eyes save his. She urged him abroad into gay company; she promoted every scheme which could draw him from his home, and actually exerted more pains to destroy his domestic habits, than ever did a neglected wife to awaken a love for home in the breast of a profligate. His affection was ridiculed, his fondness rejected, his caresses spurned, and he was at length taught by bitter and frequent lessons, that he must seek for pleasure and happiness elsewhere than in the precincts of his own domicile. The strongest attachment Eveline had ever known, was that which bound her to her family, and, absorbed in schemes for their advancement, she finally exhibited towards her husband a degree of indifference which almost broke his heart. He beheld his wealth lavished upon her father, his house made the home of her sisters, his equipage and servants given up to the command of those who despised him, and yet he felt that all this would be nothing, if he could only believe that his wife estimated his devotion to her will. But in proportion as he yielded patiently to the yoke imposed by her family, her contempt and coldness seemed to increase. Goaded beyond endurance, his feeble mind at length poured forth its sorrows into the ear of one who had long sought to win the confidence of the possessor of fortune's favors. His wife despised the office of counsellor and friend, and he therefore sought sympathy and advice among the companions of his idle hours.

It was no difficult task to find those who would listen to his sorrows, in the hope of sharing his pleasures, and led by the influence and example of such a friend, the disappointed husband began to seek enjoyment in the excitements of vicious indulgence.

Fully occupied with her own ambitious plans for the advancement of her family, Eveline took little heed of the change which was gradually taking place in her husband. She noticed with secret satisfaction that she was no longer annoyed by his officious tenderness, and, once free from this odious restraint, she flattered herself that she was acting the part of a conscientious wife. But the time came when she was to feel a void which she never before knew. Her sisters married, and occupied in their own interests, became, in a manner, estranged from her, whose superior attractions always threw them into the shade, and whose elevated position in society excited their discontent. Her father, whom she loved better than any earthly being, was suddenly removed from her by death; and, five years after her marriage, Mrs. Walmsley began to be sensible of a loneliness of heart, which she had never experienced in her earlier years. She had no children to become the recipients of the hidden tenderness of a woman's heart, and, as she grew older, she was conscious of a weariness and distaste of the pleasures of society, which led her to picture many a visionary scene of domestic bliss. But it was too late. She had thrown from her the wealth of pure affection, and the happiness which, notwithstanding her husband's want of talent, might once have been found in the contemplation of his moral excellence, was now lost for ever. She had realized all

her plans of life, she had succeeded in all her schemes for herself and family, but, at last, when driven by satiety of pleasure and loneliness of feeling, to seek for peace within the sacred limits of home, she found her feeble-minded husband transformed, by the influence of others, into the tavern-haunter and the gambler. She had suspected this terrible change long before the evidences met her view, and at length the truth in all its horrors burst upon her. But did it ever occur to her that she was the guilty cause of this moral wreck? Did she remember that the influence which love had placed in her hands had never been exerted, save to drive him from the safe precincts of domestic life? Did she reflect upon the responsibility which is incurred by the strong mind, when it binds to itself weakness and frailty? No; she felt only impatience of the imbecile being who could not resist temptation, and without a single attempt to withdraw him from his degrading pursuits, she looked with bitter loathing upon the husband whom she had sworn to honor, while she awaited in sullen impatience the moment of freedom which his failing health and repeated excesses led her to anticipate.

* * * * *

It was some ten years after the conversation recorded in the commencement of this veritable history, that the cousins were again seated together in consultation; and, strange to say, the identical diamonds which had then originated the long discussion between them, were lying on the table. The gems still sparkled in all their pristine splendor, but a change had passed over those who now looked upon them. Clara's pale

cheek and hollow temples, showed that time had not left untouched her delicate loveliness ; but the soft light of her dark eye, and the placid sweetness of her pensive countenance, were still attractive, in despite of the years which had bestowed on her the odious appellation of "*old maid* !" The proud beauty of Eveline had been less fragile. Her black eye still flashed as proudly, her tall form still retained its symmetry, notwithstanding its expanded proportions, and her raven locks still retained their rich gloss, though they might now be indebted to art for some of their redundancy. Yet there was an expression of hardness and coldness in her face, which made one think that Time had revenged himself by indurating what he could not spoil. Hers was beauty of form, unadorned with loveliness of spirit : the sculptured vase unlighted from within. Yet that face was now a far less faithful index of her mind, than it had been in her earlier years. She had worn a mask in society, until her features became moulded into the cold immobility of the "counterfeit presentiment ;" and the countenance, which, in youth, glowed with expression, while the heart remained perfectly unawakened, now remained calm as a frozen lake, while unwonted passions disturbed the current of the hidden feelings. She had become a widow, and joyfully had she witnessed the dissolution of the tie which had bound her. Mr. Walmsley's mind had sunk beneath the strong excitements of the gambling-table and the festive board. He had fallen into a state of utter imbecility for more than a year previous to his death ; but the transition between his former mental weakness, and the actual idiocy which ensued, was so gradual, the

shades of difference were so slight, that it was impossible to decide the precise period when reason became completely darkened. Availing herself of this, Mrs. Walmsley had devoted herself most assiduously to her invalid husband. His childlike simplicity of temper led him to forget all past indifference, and to welcome her present cares as evidences of returning affection. Completely subdued to her influence, he made a will, bequeathing to her all his fortune; but whether that will was executed previous to his entire alienation of mind, was a question which not even lawyers could decide. At all events, she was a handsome and wealthy widow, and—the strangest change of all—she was now a firm believer in the power of that Love whose existence she had once denied. The cousins had met to decide a mighty question.

“I think I shall wear the bandeau, but not the necklace,” said she, as she took up the casket; “the pin and ear-rings will be quite sufficient in addition to it; I do not admire too heavy a style of dress for a bride; what say you, Clara?”

“It is entirely a matter of fancy, Eveline, but I thought you did not consider diamonds suitable for a bride; I remember shocking you very much by a suggestion respecting them, on a former occasion.”

“I recollect it perfectly, coz, but at my age, one requires all the aid of ornaments. Heigh-ho! do you know, Clara, that I really believe I have some very foolish feelings about this marriage?”

“Why do you think so?”

“I am sensible of a trepidation of heart—a degree of agitation—a timidity, I might almost call it, which seems to me perfectly ridiculous.”

"How do you account for such feelings, Eveline?" asked Clara, quietly.

"You will smile if I tell you, coz, that I believe it proceeds from the anxious tenderness of ardent affections. I well remember how coldly I once reasoned with you respecting that love which you considered so necessary to wedded happiness. I knew nothing of it then, but *now*—when the age of passion has long been past—I, who in my youth, despised its power, am subjected to its influence. I tell you Clara, that the sound of, Charles Elston's voice thrills me with an emotion such as I never before dreamed of—his very step is musical to my ear; his look is like sunshine to my heart. Do not laugh at me, dear coz; I am ashamed of my own wild impulses, but never, till I met him, was I sensible of my own strength of feeling."

"He is the only living relative of your late husband, is he not?"

"Yes, he is Mr. Walmsley's cousin, and my first meeting with him was at the opening of the will. The poor fellow seemed sadly disappointed when the disposition of the estate was made known to him; and, no wonder, for he is that most helpless of earthly creatures—a poor student. Devoted to science, he has pursued fame, while fortune passed unheeded. I expected that he would have disputed the will, but he at first lacked the means, and a few interviews with me destroyed all inclination to resort to such measures. He appeared completely fascinated, and, at a time of life, when even vanity could scarcely have led me to expect admiration, I have won the truest and fondest of lovers."

Clara shook her head and smiled.

"What objection have you *now* to make, coz?" exclaimed Mrs. Walmsley, impatiently; "you predicted all sorts of misfortunes from a marriage without affection; what have you to say against one founded on the most disinterested love?"

"Nothing, except that in the first instance, it was the *bride* who was making a '*marriage de convenance*,' and in this case it may be the *suitor*."

"For shame, Clara; you are absolutely censorious. Do you suppose mere wealth could tempt a man of such high-toned feelings, such noble intellect, such refined pursuits as Charles Elston, into a union without affection?"

"I might have found difficulty in believing such a thing, had I not known an instance where intellect and beauty and pride were all sacrificed to wealth."

Eveline reddened with shame and vexation as she replied, "You pay no flattering compliment to me, Clara, by your distrust of my lover; however," she added, "we had better not discuss a subject on which we shall never agree. I am to be married on the tenth day of October, and I intend that you shall again be my bridesmaid."

"You must excuse me, Eveline."

"Indeed, I shall do no such thing; I suppose you think you are *trop passée*, but you are mistaken."

"That is not my reason for declining the honor, Eveline; a bridesmaid of thirty is not unsuited to a bride who bears the weight of some five or six additional years."

"You provoking creature; why do you remind me

of my wasted life ? Well, then, it is because you are thirty, and not twenty, that I insist on having you as a bridesmaid ; I do not desire to have some fair fresh-looking girlish creature at my side, making every one sensible of the contrast between youthful loveliness and well-preserved beauty.”

“ I am sorry I cannot serve as a foil to you, upon this occasion, Eveline,” said Clara, with a smile, “ but I assure you I have the best of all reasons for refusing.”

“ The best of all reasons ! What, are you going to be married, Clara ?”

“ I am.”

“ Can it be possible ? why, really, I thought you a confirmed old maid ; and pray who is the happy man ?”

“ Do you remember our old playfellow, Harry Wellford ?”

“ To be sure I do ; he went to Canton soon after you left school. You don’t mean to say you are going to marry him ?”

“ We were engaged before he left this country, Eveline. He was as poor as myself in worldly wealth, but we were rich in affection, and he went abroad to win that gold without which we could not be united. His business became so complicated, that he could not disengage himself without the sacrifice of all that he had toiled to obtain, and thus time passed on until nearly fifteen years have elapsed since we parted. I said we were rich in affection, and the proof of my assertion is, that we have lived upon that affection during so many years of absence. He has now returned with the competence which he sought. He finds her whom he left a blooming girl, sadly changed

in person, but not in heart, while I am happy in the belief that the snow which is slightly sprinkled amid his raven locks, has imparted no coldness to his feelings. We are to be married quietly and privately; therefore, if I partake in your bridal festivities, it must be in company with my husband."

"He shall be right welcome for your sake, dear coz.; yours, indeed, is the love which lives on long remembrance, and I hope you may reap the reward of your constancy; but who could have dreamed that so much romance was concealed beneath your quiet demeanor?"

A pretty and graceful bride was Clara Lewis, when she gave her hand to the lover of her youth, and sought, within the bosom of domestic peace, the recompense of her patient affection. But Mrs. Walmsley's second nuptials were not thus quietly celebrated. A magnificent entertainment, which formed the nine days' wonder of the fashionable world, gratified the pride of the elegant widow, while the envy of her friends was bestowed almost equally upon her splendid diamonds and her handsome young bridegroom. Charles Elston was one of those persons whose rare personal and mental gifts are counterbalanced by some great moral defect, as if to contradict the theory of human perfectibility. His fine person and graceful manners concealed a nature supremely selfish. Devoted to scientific pursuits, he was cold and passionless in temperament, while he exerted all his energies in the acquisition of fame. He had married the widow, because he could thus be put in quiet possession of his cousin's wealth, and for the sake of pecuniary advantages, he quietly endured the ridicule that attached to a union with a woman ten

years his senior. Possessed of tastes and appetites which stood him in the stead of affections and passions, his physical nature seemed entirely divided from his intellectual being. He would spend hours in the most profound research, denying himself food and sleep and rest, until he had accomplished some mental task ; then he would issue from his study, gorge himself with dainties, brutify himself with wine, and sally forth to some low and disreputable place of coarse amusement. The geniality of a susceptible moral nature, which can alone make perfect harmony between the mental and physical man, was in him entirely wanting. He was the high-souled, persevering, untiring searcher after scientific truth, or he was the brute man, enslaved by appetite, and degraded to a level with the beasts that perish.

For a proud woman like Eveline, who loved for the first time, and who had hoped that the mental grandeur of the object of her present choice would compensate her for the past years of weary bondage, nothing could have been more harassing than the conduct of Elston. Had his indifference and neglect of her proceeded from his devotion to science, she might have learned to bear it patiently ; but thus to find herself regarded as merely the necessary appendage to a fortune, and to feel that her purse was made to supply the means for pursuing those low and vicious tastes which alone could win her husband from his ambitious dreams, was a source of perpetual bitterness and sorrow. But she was now to learn that she had given herself a master. In the plenitude of her late romance, she had refused to allow any marriage settlement to be made, and consequently her husband had full control over her large income. He

had therefore no motive for hypocrisy towards her, and she saw the coarseness of his real character. She had despised the childish, frivolous tastes of her first husband; she was now shocked and disgusted by the brutal propensities of her second. From his 'better moments,' she was excluded; from his worse ones, she shrunk in fear and horror. In the many lonely hours which she now passed in vain regrets, the remembrance of that feeble but gentle spirit which she had driven out from the paradise of home, haunted her like a spectre. She thought of the relying tenderness, which had yearned so fondly but for the smallest return of affection, from her who was revelling in the enjoyments which that tenderness had gathered around her. These remembrances were fraught with bitter remorse, and yet, so strange an anomaly is woman's nature, she loved Charles Elston with all his coldness, his neglect, his coarse habits, his low vices, better a thousand times than she could ever have done the kindly and weak nature of him who had loved her so devotedly. Hers was a strong, proud soul, and only something stronger than herself, could win her affection. In the granite of Elston's character she saw more to admire than she had found in the yielding wax of Walmsley's timid nature, and the ill-treatment which she now experienced from the object of her devotion, amply avenged the unloved husband.

Another ten years passed away, and Eveline was now lying on the bed of death. Her nerves had long been shattered by painful excitement, and a sudden outbreak of brutal anger on the part of her husband had brought on an attack of paralysis. She was dying

—faded, worn, and haggard—with no power to move a finger or to utter a syllable, she lay in a stupor that resembled death.

“She will scarcely outlive the night,” said the physician, as Elston accompanied him to the door.

“She may linger in this way for weeks,” said Elston to her cousin Clara, who had hastened to her on hearing of her danger.

“Is that the physician’s opinion?” asked Clara.

“It is,” was the cold reply; “and as your family will scarcely consent to your absence during so long a time, I am afraid Eveline must depend on some less devoted nurse than yourself.”

Clara looked inquiringly in his face, as if to ask the meaning of this civil dismissal, but she saw nothing to satisfy her there, and she replied, “I will leave her then in the charge of her waiting-maid to-night, as I must make some household arrangements preparatory to leaving my children for so long a time; but if you will be so good as to send the carriage for me to-morrow morning, I will return and remain with poor Eveline while she yet breathes. She may regain her consciousness, and if so, the sight of a stranger would be painful to her.”

“As you please, madam.”

That night was one of severe tempest, and as Elston sat alone in the room with his dying wife, his soul was not unmoved within him. The wild fury of the storm without, the hard breathing of the unconscious sufferer beside him, were the only sounds that broke the silence of deep midnight. He had sent away all the attendants, and now sat moodily watching for

the moment when death should enter that silent chamber. Twice he essayed to rise, but seemed to lack courage to pursue his purpose. At length, pouring out a glass of brandy from a bottle which stood beside him, he swallowed it at a draught, and then, as if nerved by the potent spirit, he approached the bed. Holding a candle close to the distorted face, he perceived no sign of consciousness. He then drew forward a small table, and placing it close to the bed, proceeded to spread upon it a paper which he drew from his pocket. To dip a pen in the ink and place it in the lifeless fingers of the senseless being beside him, was his next task, but scarcely had he grasped his wife's hand, when he saw those leaden eyelids unclothe and those ghastly eyes fixed fearfully upon him, with a look of intelligence that could not be mistaken. He knew the unmistakable symptoms of coming death. Consciousness had revisited the stricken brain, and the helpless creature *knew* the wrong which she was powerless to prevent.

But Elston was not a man to be turned from his purpose even by the presence of death. He seized the unresisting hand, and while those frightful eyes glared in all their glassiness upon him, he traced the name of "Eveline Elston" at the foot of the will which would make him sole heir of her vast fortune. Years before, that will had been drawn up and witnessed, but Eveline, partly influenced by a superstitious dread, and partly by a wish to retain her power in her own hands, had delayed affixing her signature. Elston knew this paper was still in existence, and in the watches of that dreary night, he had sought and found it. All was

now done. He had forced that nerveless hand to follow his guidance, and he now stood, the master of all. What cared he for the frightful convulsion which now racked the frame of the dying woman? Hastily concealing the will in the private drawer where he had found it, he summoned the servants, and sent off a messenger for Clara. But before the friend of her youth could arrive, Eveline was gone for ever. The moment of returning consciousness had awakened her only to a knowledge of her husband's baseness; and, in the cup which Death offered to her lips, she tasted the bitterest drop which Life could mingle in the draught.

FLORA LESTER ;

OR, SCENES IN THE LIFE OF A BELLE.

IN a spacious apartment, richly furnished and adorned with all the *bijouterie* which wealth and fashion scatter around their favorites, sat the young and beautiful Flora Lester. The morning light came softened through the delicately painted window shades, and, as it penetrated the rose-colored silk curtains, diffused over the room a softened glow like that of summer sunset. A vase of fresh exotics stood on the centre-table, breathing the very soul of fragrance ; and, as the lovely mistress of all this luxury bent over the many-tinted flowers, a careless observer might have fancied her completely absorbed in the contemplation of their beauty. But there was a shadow on the fair brow of the beautiful girl ; the curve of her full red lip spoke of discontent and displeasure, and as she leaned her head upon her hand, she was indulging in many a half-vexed, half-sorrowful reflection.

Her unwonted mood of thought, however, was speedily disturbed by the entrance of a visitor ; and, with a sudden effort of self-command, a bright, beaming smile broke forth as she turned to welcome her guest.

“My dear Flora,” exclaimed the lady who had just

entered, "I am delighted to see you looking so well this morning; I called on purpose to inquire about you, for your face seemed almost ghastly last night, as you passed me on your way to the carriage."

Flora's cheek flushed as she replied, "The heat of Mrs. Burton's rooms was intolerable, and I danced quite too much; indeed I was completely worn out with fatigue."

"Well, I am rejoiced to hear it was nothing more serious" (with a marked emphasis on the *more*); "you looked so very unwell as you left the room, that I quite insisted on Mr. Woodford's going to inquire what was the matter; but he only laughed at me, and said it was hardly fair to make him lose his place in the quadrille, especially when you were so well attended by Colonel St. Leger."

A deeper blush now lighted up the face of the proud beauty, and her eyes darkened with indignation as, with affected carelessness, she said, "Your anxiety was quite unnecessary; the truth is, that I abandoned myself to the enjoyment of the moment, and forgot all prudence; that last waltz was too much for me."

"Ah! that last waltz!" said Miss Garston, with a scarcely perceptible sneer, "I thought it was rather imprudent. Did you hear what Mr. Woodford said as you flew past him?"

"No," said Flora, affectedly, "when one is dancing with Colonel St. Leger, his brilliancy throws every other person into the shade, and, therefore, I could hardly be expected to hear the idle remarks of a looker-on."

"The Colonel is a great favorite with most ladies,

and you are not the only one whom he has fascinated ; it is a pity he could not add constancy to his other graces," said Miss Garston, "but do you not want to know what Mr. Woodford said?"

"I am not very anxious ; you can do as you please about it," was the careless reply.

"I am half afraid of making mischief, Flora."

"You need not be so very scrupulous, Mr. Woodford's opinion is of little importance to me."

"Then you are really not engaged to him?"

"I have told you, upon a former occasion, that there was no truth in the report of my engagement with Mr. Woodford," said Flora, proudly.

"Well, your intimacy with him, and his ardent admiration of you, have given the world some warrant for believing the story."

"The belief of impertinent people, who mind every body's business but their own, shall never influence me."

"I told Mr. Woodford that you were very independent, Flora, when he spoke with some surprise of your braving public opinion."

Flora's cheek grew pale, and her lip quivered, as she turned an inquiring look upon her tormentor.

"Ah, I see you want to know all he said, although you pretend to be so indifferent. I suppose you know how he despises Colonel St. Leger, and when he saw you waltzing with the fascinating *militaire*, he expressed his contempt in no measured terms. I accused him of jealousy, and his reply was, that to be jealous we must first be in love, and for his part he did not believe that love could exist without respect and esteem : he

added, that he would as soon think of caging and petting a butterfly, as of bestowing his affections on a fashionable belle. So I give you warning, Flora, he is very angry with you, and when he next visits you, it will be to read a lecture on coquetry."

Flora bit her lip and tossed her pretty head in well dissembled scorn, but her voice trembled, and there was no gayety in the smile with which she immediately changed the conversation to some more indifferent topic. Miss Garston, who secretly envied Flora for the beauty and wealth which were unattainable gifts to herself, had come for the express purpose of shooting a poisoned arrow at the favorite of fortune; and having succeeded in her purpose, had risen to take her departure, when Mr. Woodford entered. The temptation was irresistible, and Miss Garston reseated herself, that she might witness the meeting of the two lovers, who, as she shrewdly suspected, had quarrelled on the previous evening. Stung by the ill-natured remarks she had just heard, Flora Lester's manner towards the new comer was cold and constrained. She assumed a frivolous, volatile tone to conceal her vexation, and with a gayety far from real, discussed all the topics of the day. Miss Garston, too acute not to perceive the true state of her feelings, determined to "fool her to the top of her bent." By cunningly framed phrases, she contrived to draw from Horace Woodford an expression of his opinion respecting Colonel St. Leger, and, as he was in reality vexed and pained by Flora's apparent coquetry, he expressed himself with undeserved severity, while he *insinuated* a severe reproof of the lady. Had they been quite alone, Flora's proud spirit would have

revolted against this assumption of authority, but in the presence of her false friend, it appeared to her the height of insolence, and, therefore, pretending a degree of interest, which she did not feel, she entered into a warm vindication of the absent Colonel. This immediately gave rise to one of those painful scenes which almost every one has had some opportunity of witnessing in their intercourse with society, where, under the mask of politeness, the most acrid feelings are only half concealed. The conversation soon assumed that aggressive character well known by the expressive phrase "*talk-ing at a person.*" The keen rebuke, scarce hidden beneath the flimsy veil of courtly language,—the reproach, made more severe by the consciousness of being merited,—the biting sarcasm, which stings the utterer no less than the listener,—the bitter jest, which leaves its drop of wormwood within the heart long after the voice has ceased to resound in the ear,—all were brought into requisition by the lady and her lover, while the friend (!) who secretly enjoyed the scene, added the gall of her insidious malice to the venom which angry passions were distilling upon the hearts of both. At length, when satisfied that enough mischief had been done, Miss Garston rose to take her leave, but desirous of preventing an opportunity for reconciliation, she urged Mr. Woodford to accompany her. He was too much disquieted, however, to desire her society, and a polite refusal was upon his lips, when the door of the drawing-room opened to admit Colonel St. Leger. This decided him, and with a cheek pale from suppressed emotion, and a lip that trembled with passion, he bade Miss Lester good morning, and followed the adroit Miss

Garston, leaving the gallant soldier to soothe the excited feelings of the heart-stricken girl.

Flora Lester was the child of luxury and fashion. Her father, busied in the daily accumulation of wealth, left to his wife and daughter the enjoyment of its appliances, and they fully availed themselves of his indulgence. An excellent education had improved Flora's fine mental powers, and the skill of all the best *modistes* had been put in requisition to adorn her very beautiful person. She was young, beautiful, rich, and fashionable ; these attributes were enough to make her the idol of society, but she was also high-minded, warm-hearted, and energetic,—these qualities seemed quite superfluous in the present circumstances. For nearly two years previous to the commencement of my story, she had been the object of unqualified admiration to a large circle. Beauty, wit, wealth, and worth, are advantages so rarely combined in one individual, that Flora soon became a general favorite, and it was universally admitted that, for once, fashion had enthroned a not unworthy idol. But her success in society developed those traits which, in a greater or less degree, exist in every bosom. Vanity, self-dependence, and impatience of restraint, were Flora's besetting sins, and, even as a summer cloud may eclipse the brightness of the noon-day sun, so did these faults overshadow the real nobleness of her character.

Flora had long since singled out Horace Woodford as the object of her especial regard. She knew,—“for quickly comes such knowledge”—that he was far from being indifferent to her ; and she awaited the moment when the love, so long cherished in the hearts of both,

should be revealed in the language of passionate tenderness by his lips, and responded to by her in the words of womanly devotion. There was no mistaking his attachment. He seemed to live but in her presence, and regardless of the cold decorum which etiquette enjoins, his ardent nature disclosed itself upon all occasions. Every body looked upon him as the lover of the beautiful Miss Lester, and she was conscious that for once the world was not mistaken; yet, the words which were to bind them to each other in the bonds of reciprocal faith, had never been uttered. Woodford was passionate in his love, but timid in his hopes. He was, moreover, very proud,—he waited for assurance of success, and he dreaded the mortification no less than the pain of rejection. Happy in her society, he shrunk from an explanation which might compel him to forego the pleasure, and thus he deferred from day to day and from month to month, the confession which would have secured the happiness of both. But his silence had not been without its effect on Flora's feelings. The doubt which his reserve awakened, the fear lest she should have over-estimated her own powers of pleasing, gave him a new interest in her heart, and, with the usual perverseness of human nature, that which was difficult of attainment became her chief desire. The consciousness that her own affections were engaged, however, led her to veil her feelings with the most jealous care, and with a proud determination not to be won unsought, Flora controlled every impulse which prompted to the development of her secret.

Alas! how often does the world come in between

us and happiness! How often does its cold sneer check the kindly emotion and chill the noblest impulse! How often does its dread laugh mingle harshly with the sweet music of the heart, and make discord where all should be harmony!

Flora Lester's pride had been stung by some ill-natured sarcasms respecting her lover. She had been described as "waiting his pleasure," and her constancy had been the subject of sneers and reproaches. These things were repeated to her with all the exaggeration of malice, and, at the party to which we have already alluded, she had attempted to silence the voice of scandal by thus belying her own nature. Such things happen too frequently, and there are few of those who have mingled in society but can remember occasions, when, with a heroism like that of the Spartan boy, we suffered our hearts to be gnawed by the cruel fang of a grief, which, if revealed, would have lost its power to wound. Flora had been irritated by the pertinaacious teasing of her pretended friend, Miss Garston, and when Horace Woodford entered the room, she determined to feign perfect indifference. Colonel St. Leger, an English officer, the second son of an Earl, and himself a member of Parliament, was, just then, the object of universal attention. He had been much struck with the beauty and dignified grace of Miss Lester, and a very little encouragement was sufficient to attach him to her side during the evening. She danced with him repeatedly, listened with most expressive and flattering attention to his anecdotes, allowed him to wait upon her at supper, and finally suffered him to fold her cloak around her and lead her to the carriage.

Indeed, she had proceeded much farther than she originally intended, for she was piqued by Horace Woodford's evident coldness and his ill-disguised contempt of her conduct. She was satisfied that she had now put to silence all the idle gossip which had so much annoyed her, and yet she half regretted the course she had adopted, since it had cost her the displeasure of her lover. However, she looked forward to a meeting the following day which should explain every thing, and she had been in momentary expectation of a visit from him, when Miss Garston so inopportunately appeared.

Horace Woodford had gone to the party solely to meet Flora. He had determined to be no longer in suspense, and had secretly resolved to find some opportunity in the course of the evening to secure an uninterrupted interview with her for the next morning, when it was his intention to offer her the heart where she had long reigned paramount. To a man of Woodford's shy and sensitive temper, such a resolution is only attained by a severe struggle. Nothing but his faith in Flora's predilection for him could have conquered the proud reserve which had so long restrained the expression of his cherished love, and it was with a bosom overflowing with tenderness that he had mingled in the gay scenes of the night. It would be vain to attempt describing the tempest of his feelings as he witnessed Flora's unwonted coquetry and seeming indifference. Jealousy, anger, mortification, and wounded affection, all in turn ruled his spirit, until he could no longer conceal his emotions. Miss Garston's insidious remarks had goaded him almost to madness, and in-

stead of attempting to speak with Flora, he stood aloof, watching her with a sarcastic look, until her departure broke the spell, and left him to return moody and miserable to his home.

But few can retain angry feelings when left to solitary communion with their own hearts. Horace Woodford rose from his sleepless couch with a determination to seek an explanation with Flora, which should either bind them for ever to each other, or sever every tie between them. Had he found her alone, her generous nature and her secret affection would have silenced the dictates of her pride; but, when in the presence of the malicious friend, he ventured to censure her conduct, every indignant feeling was in a moment aroused. She was conscious that his reserve had exposed her to invidious remarks, while it deprived him of a right to assume the character of her suitor. Wounded pride and unsatisfied affection gave poignancy to her emotions, and the interview ended in seeming anger, but real anguish to both.

Flora's self-command had supported her during Colonel St. Leger's visit, but the door had scarcely closed behind him, when she sunk on the sofa in a passion of tears. Long and deeply did she weep over the occurrences of the past few hours. She would have given worlds to recall the stinging words which she had uttered to him whom she loved best upon earth; but the voice had gone forth, the envenomed breath of passion had tainted the atmosphere around her, and the flowers of hope and peace were blighted for ever. A severe head-ache,—that ready apology for the far

more powerful heart-ache, at which the world only jeers and scoffs, and which we therefore would blush to acknowledge,—confined Flora to her apartment for the remainder of the day. There was a brilliant ball in the evening, and her absence was at first attributed to the fatigues of the previous night, until Miss Garston kindly enlightened a large bevy of beauties and beaux by a detail, more amusing than veritable, of the lovers' quarrel, to which she had been a witness.

Ere Flora had left her room on the following morning a letter was handed to her; it was from Woodford, and contained these words:

"Honor forbids me to depart, after all that has passed, without affording you some explanation of my intentions. I despise the character of a male flirt as heartily as I do that of a coquette, and lest I should be accused of having trifled with you, Miss Lester, I have conquered my pride and subjected myself to the mortification of avowing that my heart has long been yours. I have loved you, Flora, as few can love. You have been the joy, the hope of my life. My waking visions were all of you, my dreams were radiant with the light of your beauty. I have been less a lover than a worshipper, and I bowed long in deep humility, before my idol, ere I dared to breathe my vow, or offer the homage of my heart. Flora, I came to you yesterday with hopes which you have crushed, and fears which you have realized. I came to lay my whole soul bare before you,—to make known to you its love,—to discover to you the wounds which your levity had inflicted, and to ask the balm of sympathy

and affection. I will not recall the pain of that meeting. It is enough that the sweet waters swelling up from the pure fountain of affection in my bosom have been mingled with the bitter draught of distrust.

“Flora Lester, you are beautiful and gifted; you will have many lovers and many flatterers, but the one true heart, which would have cherished you through all the changes of this changeful life, has been flung from you in scorn. I would have placed my happiness in your keeping, I would have given you what gold could never win, but you have despised my offering even before it was laid at your feet. A sense of my own integrity has drawn from me this confession, and the better feelings of your nature will appreciate how much it has cost me. At the moment when I utter my long-silent affection, I bid you a last farewell. I have not written this in order to awaken your pity; sympathy might once have given me happiness, but compassion I should scorn to accept. I have neither hope nor wish to touch your feelings; henceforth we are utter strangers. I only ask what I have a right to claim, that this letter, the cold expression of my tortured feelings, may not be subjected to the cruel ridicule of your fashionable friends, or made the subject of mirth to your less conscientious admirers. Let us not part in anger; let us extend mutual forgiveness for the many bitter words which both have uttered, and if you ever think of me, let it be as one who seeks to efface your image from the heart which you have spurned, because, however powerful has been his love for you, he finds a still stronger impulse in his duty towards himself.”

Let the young and loving heart picture to itself the agonies of Flora's wounded spirit as she perused these cruel words. Her first impulse was to write to Horace, but when she re-read his letter and again beheld the stinging sentence, "I have neither hope nor wish to touch your feelings," the pride of woman was aroused, and she almost despised herself for wishing his return. A hope, faint at first, but strengthening as she encouraged it, that she should yet meet him and exculpate herself from the imputation of heartless coquetry, reconciled her to the silence which decorum enforced; and though several days past ere she was able to rise from her sick bed, she still looked forward to the future without despair. But she had not yet drank the full draught of sorrow which her own hand had prepared. The very first day that she was permitted to enter the drawing-room, a visitor announced that Horace Woodford had sailed for Europe, and in the relapse which followed her nervous excitement, Flora, for a time, lost all consciousness of her overwhelming grief.

How strange are the vagaries of the human heart! how manifold the phases of its deceit! how varied the form of its disguises! and how rarely is it seen in its true deformity, or its unadorned simplicity! Flora Lester recovered from her long illness, and returned to the gay world, less brilliant, but perhaps more touchingly beautiful than she had ever been. Her first task was to reply to the overtures of Colonel St. Leger, who, having heard the garbled story of her lover's jealousy, was not a little vain of thus securing, almost without an effort, a beautiful wife, with a rich dowry of broad lands, and bank stock, which were by no means a despicable

addition to her charms. Flora declined his addresses, kindly, but firmly, and the Colonel, as he stood on the steps of the Astor House, displaying at one and the same time his white teeth and his golden, ruby-tipped tooth-pick, was at a loss whether to be most astonished or indignant at her want of taste and his disappointment.

But those long days of illness and despondency which Flora had lately passed in the quiet of her own chamber, had not been without their effect upon her character. Hitherto her life had been all sunshine, and the mental vision which had been dazzled by the glare of fashion, acquired new strength from the gloom which now surrounded her. As she reclined her aching head on the couch of pain, while death seemed watching beside her pillow, the gauds and toys which had contributed to her past enjoyments, seemed to her utterly insignificant and worthless. She thought of her wasted time, her unemployed talents, her slumbering energies, and she remembered with pain and sorrow, the petty interests, the vain follies, the jealous rivalries of her fashionable career. She resolved to change her whole course of life; and when the equable pulse of health once more measured her length of days, she was as much improved in mental as in bodily vigor. But the world still retained a power over her; she dared not brave its ridicule, and she therefore contented herself with secret resolutions and mental restraints. She went out amid its gay scenes, and though her step was less frequent in the dance, and her voice unheard when the tale of scandal circulated, still she had not boldly marked out the line of her duty. She wanted discipline of a still more vigorous kind, and the time came when

her character received the final touch necessary to its perfection.

About two years after the events just narrated, Mr. Lester was found dead in his counting-room. His family was told that he was a victim to apoplexy, but the discreet physician, who concealed a small pocket-pistol found upon the floor, and who accounted for a blue and swollen wound upon his head by attributing it to his fall, alone knew better. His sudden death made it necessary to look into his affairs without delay, and ere he was cold in his grave, it was generally known that he died a bankrupt. Cotton speculations and injudicious investments in real estate had ruined him, and all his assets would not pay the half of his debts. Of course every thing was given up to the creditors, and in less than six months after the funeral, the wife and daughter of the ruined merchant were beggared and homeless.

Those who had only beheld Flora Lester in the parlors of fashion, drawing around her a circle of admirers, and securing the attention of all by those nameless little arts which only a woman can practice, could never have suspected the hidden strength of her character. She was one of those whose energies are called out by emergencies—whose powers always equal the necessities of the moment. Her mother, brought up in the indolence and luxury of a southern climate, was unable either to advise or act. Overwhelmed by the sudden calamities which had befallen her, she could only weep and bewail the irretrievable past, while upon Flora devolved the duty of making all arrangements for the future. With no experience in business matters, and little knowledge of the sordid characteristics of human

nature, Flora yet succeeded beyond her hopes. The creditors compassionating the destitute condition of the mother and daughter, who had relinquished even their jewels, the adornments of their former wealth, agreed to allow Mrs. Lester an annuity of \$300 for the next five years. Upon this miserable pittance, a less sum than she had been in the habit of paying her milliner, Flora and her mother were now to subsist, and the most rigid economy became absolutely essential. Pride, as well as the necessity of reducing their expenses within the smallest limits, forbade them to remain in the city which had witnessed their early affluence, and ere the first year of their mourning had expired, they retired to a small village whose only recommendation was the cheapness with which the means of life might be procured. The world wondered and talked of sympathy and pity, and mouthed all those fine phrases which mean so little, and are so insulting to the feelings of the unfortunate. Some surmised that Flora would not now hold her head quite so high, and speculated upon her chances of matrimony ; while a few, a very few, really felt the sympathy which they ventured not to express to the heart-stricken mourners.

Time sped on, and as his wheels scattered the golden sand beneath the feet of the fortunate and the happy, they recked little of the many crushed and bleeding hearts over which that scythe-armed chariot rolled in its onward course. People forgot the belle of the past season ; another as lovely was enthroned in her stead, and the brilliant circlet of fashion was still unbroken even though one of its fairest gems had fallen from the bright wreath. Meanwhile Flora Lester

buried her regrets and her privations in seclusion. To watch over her mother's failing health, and to cultivate her own neglected talents so as to provide some resource against future want, were now her only cares. She anticipated a life of sorrow and of hardship, while the pride which had once led her to be first in extravagant display, now showed itself in her graceful and firm submission to circumstances. She was too proud to conceal their poverty, too proud to make any sacrifice to mere appearances, too proud to exhibit any of that truckling spirit which enables one to parade the shadow of past splendors as an excuse for present penury. She was too much absorbed in the study of her mother's comfort to think of her own. Mrs. Lester, quite unconscious of the real value of money, sought to indulge all the morbid appetites of a valetudinarian, and Flora, by her secret industry and patient attention, endeavored to gratify her, without allowing her to be sensible of the cost at which her wants were satisfied.

But Flora was not insensible to those pangs which are the more severe because they must be concealed. Even in the midst of her self-denying duties, she was grieving over her own private sorrows, and fate's quiver was not yet emptied of its venomous arrows. Little news reached them in their retirement, yet there was more than Flora sought to hear. A paper which accidentally fell into her hands contained the announcement of Horace Woodford's marriage in England, and she felt that every tie which bound her to life was rapidly sundering. Yet she wavered not in her path of duty. Her mother was sinking into the helplessness of nervous

-

imbecility, and the care she now required, and the necessity of providing means to ensure her the comforts of life, afforded Flora full employment, both of head and heart. She painted fire-screens and card-baskets, embroidered pincushions and reticules, drew vignettes for cheap books, and employed herself in all those little nicknacks for which people more willingly pay than they would for really useful articles. A kind neighbor, who made a weekly visit to the next town, undertook to dispose of these things for her, and the beauty of her workmanship, together with the low price at which they were offered, soon procured a ready sale, and an order for a regular supply of the same. Flora was happy to be thus enabled to assist her mother, and her own sorrows were hidden beneath a quiet manner and a placid countenance. It was a sad change for one who had been the cynosure of all eyes, the star of beauty in her own bright sphere. A weaker mind would have been crushed, a masculine temper would have become rugged and harsh beneath such discipline; but the character of Flora Lester was like the golden ore, it required the skill of the refiner and the trial by fire, to divest it of the dross which alone impaired its purity and value.

Mrs. Lester never recovered from the stroke which had so suddenly deprived her of husband and home and fortune. A weak and querulous discontent embittered her whole existence. Nothing seemed to suit her perverted taste; her palate coveted dainty food, which, when brought to her, she refused to taste, because its savor recalled to recollection the damask napery, the silver, and the rich crystal which had once decked her table. She pined for the exotics which had once

perfumed her apartments, and yet turned in disgust from the pure and healthful odors of the sweet garden flowers which Flora had reared to gratify her. She mourned over the thought of the rich dresses and costly jewels which had once decked her faded beauty, and yet, wrapping herself in a slovenly dressing-gown, refused to adopt the neat attire which Flora's hands had fashioned from the remains of their well-filled wardrobes. She was ever murmuring at some petty discomfort, ever longing for some fancied good, and Flora was completely enslaved by her caprice. But the patient and dutiful daughter uttered no complaint. She pursued the path which conscience pointed out before her, and she met her reward in the approval of Heaven. Nor was her mother blind to her many virtues until, at length, a stroke of paralysis deprived her of all power of motion, when, after lingering many days, she breathed her last on the anniversary of her husband's untimely death, blessing with her last articulate words, the child who had watched over her with such tender care.

In a beautiful villa, not far from a populous city, but so embowered with trees and shrubbery, as to be quite secluded from the passing crowd,—with a lawn reaching down to the very brink of the noble Hudson, and flower-beds, rich with Flora's treasures, offering their incense to the careless winds,—resided one of Fortune's most distinguished favorites. Mr. Wyndham had inherited his estate, and a liberal education had taught him the true method of enjoying it, while his choice of a wife had been equally judicious both as respected character and fortune. Mrs. Wyndham was not handsome enough to be a belle, nor rich

enough to be considered a great heiress, but she was pretty, amiable, well-informed, and independent. They had been married some twelve years, and the uninterrupted harmony in which they lived, proved that each was fully sensible of the other's value. Three children, two lovely daughters, and a fine spirited boy, now occupied their thoughts, and the natural anxiety of parental love made them dread the moment when those unsullied minds should be subjected to the influences of a school. The well-spring of knowledge is ever pure, but the stream becomes polluted in its course, and the young lip, as it bends to drink the wave, too often imbibes a deadly poison instead of the healthful draught. Mrs. Wyndham, therefore, resolved to employ a governess at home, being well assured that the retirement in which they lived afforded every facility for training her children to intellectual pursuits.

It was the evening of an excessively warm day in mid-summer, when Mr. Wyndham's light wagon turned into the carriage drive which wound up to his door, and, as he flung the reins to his servant, he handed out a tall, delicate-looking woman, whose deep mourning dress formed an almost startling contrast to the marble whiteness of her complexion. "It is the governess;" whispered the children, involuntarily retreating within the porch. "It is the governess," thought Mrs. Wyndham, as with instinctive kindness she advanced to meet the pallid, wearied-looking creature who stood hesitatingly on the gravel-walk. In a few minutes the bonnet, with its heavy veil, was flung aside,—the coolest seat was arranged, an Indian fan was offered, a glass of iced lemonade was handed, and all that be-

nevolence could suggest was put into requisition to contribute to the comfort of the shrinking governess.

"You will not think of beginning your duties until next week, my dear Madam," said Mrs. Wyndham, after she had succeeded in making the new comer feel somewhat re-assured. "My children are spoiled pets, they obey the rule of love, and I mean that they shall learn to know and to love you before you attempt the task of instruction. Come here, Eloise," and with a smile the fond mother drew forward the blushing child, who, ensconced behind her mother's chair, had been timidly gazing at the strange lady. "My little Alfred will also be your charge for the next year or two," continued Mrs. Wyndham, "and though Ada is still too young to become a regular pupil, she will probably claim a little of your attention. Ah, here comes Bertha; I was just about sending for you, my dear." The child drew near, and as the governess imprinted a kiss on her pale cheek, an indefinable emotion agitated her. There was an expression in the full dark eyes of the little girl so like to those which had once left their light within her soul, that the lady started as she caught their gaze. Blushing at the attention she had excited, the timid Bertha slowly withdrew, and as soon as she was out of hearing, Mrs. Wyndham said :

"May I beg you, my dear Madam, to take especial pains with the culture of that sweet child. She is the only daughter of one of my husband's dearest friends; an insidious disease is destroying her health and distorting her delicate frame, and I am desirous that her parents should find in her mental graces some solace for her bodily deformity. Yet I have but little hope

even of this ; she has heretofore been exceedingly backward in acquiring knowledge ; she is timid, distrustful of herself, and rather dull of intellect, but there never was a sweeter temper or more amiable character in childhood than that of Bertha Woodford."

A slight sound, less a cry than a moan, burst from the lips of the governess, and the next moment she was lying in a swoon at the feet of Mrs. Wyndham.

"It must be the heat," said that kind-hearted woman, as she called loudly for assistance. The children and servants came hurrying in with all the useless confusion so common on such occasions, and Mrs. Wyndham, notwithstanding her benevolence, could not help thinking that a habit of fainting was rather inconvenient in a governess. But the first words of the reviving lady were those of apology, and her tearful eye offered a powerful appeal to the feelings of all present. Mrs. Wyndham accompanied her to her apartment, insisted on aiding her to undress, and smoothed her pillow with the hand of sympathy ere she left her to the solitude so necessary to her excited feelings.

Flora Lester (for the pale governess was no other than the once idolized belle) was grateful for all this kindness, but she needed rest and quiet, and when she laid her aching head upon the pillow her heart was filled with the deepest wretchedness. Tell me not of the sorrows of later life ;—they may wear deep furrows in the brow, and imprint ineffaceable scars upon the heart,—they may waste away the very life, but they come not upon us with the sudden and irresistible and crushing power of a *first* heart-sorrow. The first pang of wounded affection is never forgotten,—that

early blight of youthful feeling is ever to be found amid the green hopes of the future,—the shadow of that first grief dims every after pleasure, and deepens every after sorrow. We recur to it in every period of life ; if gifted with many blessings, we remember it as the one dark spot over which our feet once trod ;—if doomed to many afflictions, we recall it as the starting point in our journey of sorrows. Let our fortunes be what they may, the heart must often sit solitary amid the ruins of its earliest hopes. Alas ! it too often happens that the treasure which should have lasted us through life has been wasted upon the adornment of those fairy fanes of ‘ youth’s delighted hours,’ and we find, when too late, that the affections have no *second* mine of fine gold.

It was in vain that Flora Lester reasoned with herself on her own folly,—in vain she reproached herself for thus weakly yielding to her emotions. “ Why,” said she, mentally, “ why should I be so moved by the sight of that fair child ? I have long since learned to think of Horace Woodford as the husband of another, and have repressed every regret which once agitated my bosom. Why then am I thus overcome ? Alas ! it is but the one drop which was wanting to make my full cup of sorrow to overflow,—the one feather whose added weight has broken the strength of the over-laden camel. It needed but this to make me feel my utter desolation.” But she had acquired new strength for sorrow, and had learned to conceal if she could not conquer her impulses of feelings. When, on the following day, she appeared at the breakfast table in a neat morning dress, with her luxuriant hair plainly

braided and hidden under a simple cap, few could have suspected that such unmitigated wretchedness was veiled by her placid smile.

Mrs. Wyndham was charmed with Flora's elegant manners, and warmly interested in her past sorrows. She knew enough of her misfortunes to be sensible that one cast down from such estate should be dealt with tenderly, and if mere kindness could have healed the wounds of fate, Flora might have forgotten the painful past in the enjoyment of present good fortune. The children were affectionate and easily controlled by gentle persuasion, so that her duties were light and pleasant, while the respect with which she was treated by the parents, placed her upon the footing of a friend rather than a hireling in the family. But still Flora felt as if she were destined to be haunted by the images of by-gone days. The dark, deep eyes of Bertha, so like those of her father, were ever present to her thought, shedding a melancholy radiance on the pictures long enshrined in memory's darkened cell.

Bertha Woodford was one of those shy, reserved, yet warm-hearted children, who are so easily checked by a word of reproof, or incited by a look of kindness. Her fragile health debarred her from the ordinary sports of childhood, and, young as she was, (for she had scarcely numbered her sixth summer,) she had become silent, melancholy, and imaginative. Sometimes she would attempt to join in the amusements of her little companions, and for a few minutes, her musical laugh would ring out merrily, amid their joyful sports; but a sense of weakness would suddenly overpower her,

and fatigued and unhappy she would return to her usual reclining posture in her easy chair. A disease of the spine, that most insidious and cruel of all the ills to which humanity is subjected, had been gradually developing itself ever since Bertha was an infant. Mrs. Woodford was ordered by her physicians to travel for several years, and it was soon discovered that the nature of Bertha's malady rendered the fatigues of locomotion a serious injury to the child. The father, thus called upon to make a decision between the health of his wife and child, was utterly at a loss what to do until the kindness of Mrs. Wyndham relieved him from his embarrassment. Mr. Wyndham had been the intimate friend of Horace Woodford, and when they met in Europe, it was proposed that the suffering child should visit America in the care of Mrs. Wyndham. The offer was gladly and gratefully accepted, and Bertha had now been for more than two years, the inmate of that happy family. She loved her aunt, (as she always styled Mrs. Wyndham,) and she was fondly attached to the children, but she often felt lonely and unhappy. The confiding frankness with which her little cousins ran to their indulgent mother, the caresses lavished upon them, the earnest sympathy which their slightest sufferings excited, all made Bertha sensible of the contrast which her condition afforded. Kindness, and tenderness she had always experienced at the hands of Mrs. Wyndham, but the shy temper of the timid child was not easily comprehended by the proud and happy mother of healthy and joyous little ones. She wished Bertha to be made as comfortable as her painful situation would allow; she procured

good nurses and the best of medical skill for the alleviation of her physical sufferings, but she could not enter into the lonely and isolated feelings of the young invalid. She was as sympathizing as circumstances would allow, but she could not penetrate the reserve of Bertha's character so far as to discover the morbid sensibility which pined for the loving look and the voice of deep affection.

The misfortunes of the pale and sad-looking governess, whose mourning dress and deep dejection had early excited the curiosity of the children, awakened the warmest interest in the little girl, whose feelings had been prematurely developed by suffering. When the lessons of the day were over, and the pupils ran out, to vent, in a game of romps, the exuberance of their animal spirits, the timid Bertha would creep softly to the secluded little music room, and for hours she would sit listening to the sounds awakened by Miss Lester's hand, as the young governess now cultivated, from a sense of duty, the talents which had once been only the adornments of her affluence. Absorbed in her own melancholy reflections, it was some days before Flora noticed the patient child, in the remote and darkened corner where she usually seated herself. But she needed no new impulse to awaken her warmest interest in the child of Horace Woodford, and from the moment when Flora learned to read Bertha's true character, the bond of sympathy became a secret link between their hearts. Bertha had hitherto been considered rather obtuse in intellect and incapable of much mental exertion, for her timid nature had been subjected to those petty mortifications from servants and

attendants which so often act with benumbing power upon the expanding faculties. Her frequent attacks of illness interrupted her attempts at study, and at six years of age the child was utterly ignorant of the very rudiments of knowledge. But Miss Lester possessed the art of arousing her dormant energies. Under her instructions, Bertha improved rapidly, and hope and cheerfulness soon lighted up the pale face of the desponding child. Nor was Flora insensible to the pleasure which the consciousness of being useful always imparts. The affection of the sensitive child afforded her a new motive for exertion, and her loneliness of heart gradually gave place to a deep and tender interest in her present duties.

Mrs. Wyndham gladly resigned Bertha entirely to the care of Miss Lester. The restless nights which the child had often passed in pain, silently endured because she dreaded the impatient chidings of her hired attendant, were now spent in the apartment of the gentle governess. Her patient watchfulness, her close observation of Bertha's malady, her judicious application of the alleviating remedies prescribed by medical skill, the influence which enabled her to combat the child's listlessness and languor, the daily exercise of body and mind, which she induced by her affectionate persuasions and enforced by her example,—all were of essential service to the young sufferer. She became even as a mother to the child of him who had once been the object of her fondest affection, and in the society of Bertha, the bereaved Flora found a solace for past griefs and present privations.

Time passed on, and the bonds which knit Flora

Lester to the friends among whom she lived, seemed daily to strengthen. Mrs. Wyndham possessed one of those noble characters which even prosperity cannot spoil. She had a kind word, a gentle thought, an impulse of sympathy for every one, and her feelings towards the governess had warmed into actual friendship. There was something so lady-like in Flora's manner, so much of the sweetness of subdued sorrow in her voice, and her face wore such an expression of placid, pensive softness, that it was impossible to look upon her with indifference.

"I never saw Miss Lester in the days of her prosperity," said Mrs. Wyndham to her husband one day, "but I am sure she never was more lovely than she is now. I sometimes drop my book or my needle-work, and gaze at her unseen, as she bends over the harp, or sits at the piano, until my heart grows full and my eyes are suffused with tears. Her pale sweet face, the slight bend of her still fine figure and the deep pathos of her exquisite voice, awaken a train of feelings half pleasing, half melancholy. She seems to be like an impersonation of resignation. If I were a painter I should desire no finer model for a picture of subdued sorrow, and yet in a picture her greatest charm,—her low and touching voice, would be lost. How much she must have suffered before the pride of which I used to hear so much could be thus subdued."

"Flora Lester was always superior to her companions in society," was the reply. "Society made her a belle, but nature had made her a high-minded and gifted woman. I knew her but slightly, yet circumstances made me acquainted with many noble traits in her

character, for he, from whom my information was derived, studied her closely with the deep interest of affection."

"Ah, who was that, pray?" asked Mrs. Wyndham, with a true woman's interest in a love tale.

"Did you ever hear Horace Woodford speak of Miss Lester?"

"Never."

"He was a strange fellow, and had some romantic notions about the delicate reserve which ought to characterize true affection; but to me, who had been his friend from boyhood, he came for counsel and sympathy. He was passionately attached to Miss Lester, yet he feared lest the incense of adulation should have tarnished the idol of his dreams; he dreaded lest she should be spoiled by the flatteries of society; and while his whole heart was devoted to her, he yet hesitated to make known to her his sentiments."

"Was not that rather inconsistent with such deep affection?"

"Not in such a man as Horace Woodford. He had peculiar, indeed, almost Utopian ideas of a perfect household. He looked far into the future, and believed a heavy responsibility rested upon the man who gave an unworthy mother to his children. He fancied that the propensities and tendencies of the character were always maternal inheritances, and he dreaded lest the errors of a profligate child should be traceable hereafter, to the same dispositions, only less developed, in the mother. It was, perhaps, a fanciful theory, but he was a firm believer in it, as all men are in their own speculations, and therefore he lingered and watched, and

studied the captivating belle, long after she had flung her charms around him."

"His caution seemed not unnecessary, for his studies led to no very satisfactory result."

"Woodford is as fallible as most of us; he had nearly satisfied himself that there was a mine of fine gold hidden beneath the strata of wilfulness, caprice and pride in Miss Lester's character, when some little pique, some foolish jealousy, some lovers' quarrel decided the whole affair. Like all shy and sensitive people, Horace was easily wounded in his self-love, and she inflicted upon him some mortification which he could not forgive. I never heard the particulars of the story, except from ill-natured gossip, and therefore I never gave credence to them. He went to Europe immediately afterwards, and there married as you know, a young West-Indian, who fell in love with him because he saved her from drowning in the Rhine. I believe he was actuated solely by a wish to spare the gentle and fragile girl the sufferings, which, he too well knew, were the result of an unfortunate attachment. She seemed rapidly sinking into the grave when they were married, as he told me, and he could hardly have hoped to preserve her life so long. However, he watches over her with pitying tenderness, which she returns with a fond and childlike tenderness, but she is not the woman to excite his deep interest."

"You have solved a mystery for me, Edward; when we met in Switzerland, I really wondered what could have induced your intellectual and gifted friend to marry such a weak, childish little creature as Mrs. Woodford appeared to be."

"I suppose your feminine taste for romance will enable you to appreciate his past disappointment, and present self-devotion," said Mr. Wyndham, smiling; "for my own part, I should doubt Mrs. Woodford's capability for any very strong affection. She seems to look up to her husband with a sort of infantile dependence, very flattering to him, and very agreeable to her, since it ties him closely to her side, and ensures her his undivided attention. But I have little faith in the nature of any mother who could part with an only child as easily and cheerfully as she relinquished Bertha. I believe her to be one of those weak, indolent, selfish valetudinarians, who like to get rid of trouble, and seek to become the chief object of interest to all around them. Her affections centre in herself, and she loves Horace because he ministers to her comfort."

"You are as uncharitable as a woman; you would have thought me ill-natured if I had made such assertions."

"Perhaps I should, for women are too apt to observe their own sex through the medium of prejudice, but men are always prepossessed in favor of women, and therefore, when we judge hardly of you, there is generally good reason for it."

The very evening after this conversation, letters from Europe were placed in the hands of Mr. Wyndham. One was sealed with black, and with the feeling of self-reproach, which all experience when suddenly reminded of the censure we have bestowed upon those who have now passed away from praise or blame, he read the tidings of Mrs. Woodford's death. Horace wrote sadly and despondingly, for his spirits were broken by anxiety

and protracted watchfulness. He dwelt with melancholy fondness on the idea of his invalid child, and expressed his intention of speedily returning to his native land, in order to devote his future life to her happiness. Bertha listened to the fatal news with deep but not unconsolable grief. She had left her mother at so early an age, that she could scarcely be expected to retain a very vivid recollection of maternal fondness. Indeed, she could remember nothing except a pale, delicate woman, always wrapped in shawls, and propped up by pillows, who could not bear the slightest noise, and in whose apartments she was rarely allowed to enter. Still, Bertha wept over the severance of so holy a tie, and when she beheld her young companions daily receiving a thousand evidences of maternal affection, she mourned less for the mother than for the want of a mother's love.

But Bertha found solace in the kindness and sympathy of Miss Lester, and upon her bosom she wept away the keenness of her regrets, without dreaming of the tumult of feeling which had been awakened in that long-suffering heart. The image of Horace Woodford, free from every tie—of Horace Woodford, the father of the sweet child, who had become so very dear to her, rose before the mental vision of the still beautiful governess, as she soothed the childish grief of the little orphan. In vain she reproached herself with selfishness and want of feeling. Reason enabled her to subdue the half-formed wish, ere it became a hope, but still the fancy would return, and it required long and painful discipline, ere Flora could check the impulses which she could but condemn. Yet the strength of

character, and the accurate perception of duty, which are the fruits of suffering, were not wanting to Flora. She did not weakly indulge the wild vagaries of fancy, until they became blended with anticipations of future happiness. She reflected upon the painful past, she recalled the days of her prosperity, she thought of the wayward wastefulness with which she had dissolved the real pearl of affection in the acrid cup of angry passions. Her blighted youth, her faded beauty, her altered fortunes, her lowly station, were not forgotten, and the humility which she had learned from adversity, reproached her for the presumption of her vague imaginations.

It was some six months after the news of Mrs. Woodford's death, when Bertha was thrown into a state of nervous agitation by the daily expectation of her father's return. Flora found it no easy task to listen with apparent calmness to the child's pleasant anticipations, and her assurances of the pleasure which her father would find, in learning all the kindness of her governess.

"I can run almost as fast as Eloise, and I have had none of those dreadful pains for a year past, and I can write almost as well as Alfred, and can play on the piano better than any one in the house, excepting you; oh, how glad papa will be! how much happier than if he had found me such a poor little lame and stupid creature as I was when you first came here."

Bertha was not disappointed. Her father, taught by his own despondency, had expected to see a crippled and helpless invalid, and tears of joy burst from his eyes as the child sprang into his arms, with her

cheek flushed with joy, and her eyes sparkling with animation. He was never tired of hearing the praises of "our dear good madam," as the children were in the habit of calling their governess, and Mrs. Wyndham, who had a romantic scheme of her own about the affair, put no check upon Bertha's fervent expressions of gratitude.

"But who is this dear good old lady to whom I am so much indebted?" said the grateful parent, after he had listened to the child's story again and again; "I should like to see her, and thank her for her invaluable kindness."

Bertha laughed, her own glad musical laugh, as she drew her father into the music-room. "Come, papa, let me show you the dear *old* lady," said she, while her little face was brimful of mirth at the idea of her father thinking Miss Lester an old woman. Mr. Woodford mechanically followed where Bertha led, and the next moment he stood, agitated and excited, in the presence of Flora Lester.

What were the emotions of both, it would be vain to attempt describing, but the artless joy of Bertha served to divert their painful embarrassment. Mr. Woodford expressed his gratitude warmly and earnestly, though a consciousness of unforgotten tenderness gave a tremulous sadness to his tone; while Flora, agitated, and almost alarmed at her own emotion, stood breathless and blushing before him. Long, long did that image haunt the memory of the widowed lover. He had remembered Flora Lester as the brilliant votary of fashion—the richly-dressed belle, with jewels sparkling in her hair, and a face as beautiful as spring

sunshine. Even as we recall some familiar scene in nature, not clad in the sombre hue of twilight, but gilded with the rich hue of glorious sunshine, so his recollection of Flora had been full of brightness. He had never before thought of her, except as the star of some bright sphere, yet now his heart was full of new images of loveliness. The delicate and touching beauty of that saddened face, the fragile form attired in its dusky dress, the luxuriant hair hidden beneath a close cap, and the whole appearance giving evidence that sorrow had been a less merciful devastator than time, awakened a train of feeling which was more dangerous to his peace than all his former admiration of her loveliness. Had his early affection faded by slow decay, or been utterly crushed by Flora's disdain, her altered beauty would never have enkindled a new flame amid the ashes of his extinguished passion. But time had long since brought reflection, and the more he thought on his precipitancy, the more he was disposed to blame himself. Pride, however, still remained his unconquerable master, and even while he scarcely exonerated Flora, he yet travelled from place to place, in the hope of effacing early recollections by new impressions. Yielding himself to despondent recklessness, he married, because he could not bear to fling thorns in the pathway of one who seemed approaching the valley of the shadow of death, and from that time he had carefully avoided all recurrence to past events. But when wearied with the petty exactions, the minute vexations, the trifling objects of interest, which marked the daily existence of his invalid wife, whom sickness had made selfish, the remembrance of the high-minded, beautiful, and noble-

hearted Flora, whose only errors had been those of a lofty and impetuous nature, rose before him as a reproachful spectre of the past.

It needed no effort of ingenuity on the part of Mrs. Wyndham to excite the interest of the parent in all that concerned the welfare of his child. He listened to her details of Flora's attentive kindness; he observed Bertha's affectionate reliance on Flora's judgment; he marked their daily intercourse, characterized by tenderness on the one hand, and the utmost devotion of childish love on the other, until he was persuaded that the happiness of his darling child, no less than his own, was in the keeping of the gentle governess. But this was no time to express such emotions, and placing a guard over every look and word, Horace Woodford found himself her daily companion, drawing solace and peace from her presence, yet hiding in his heart of hearts, the wishes which were fast ripening into hopes.

More than a year elapsed after his return ere he ventured to breathe his confession in the ear of the blushing Flora, but he was scarcely prepared for the reply which awaited him.

"No, Mr. Woodford," said Flora, "had you returned to me while fortune still showered her favors upon me and my life was one of prosperity and happiness, I could have forgotten all my pride, and sued for forgiveness of my past folly, while I would gladly have devoted myself to your future happiness. But I cannot suffer you to wed me in poverty and humility. The world will say that the poor governess has joyfully accepted what the rich heiress contemned, and for your own sake, Horace Woodford, I may not become your wife."

"The world, Flora," exclaimed Woodford, mournfully, "has not the opinion of the world cost us too much already? Was it not for that paltry price you bartered my happiness and your own when you yielded to the impulses of pride, and scorned a true heart for the sake of the evil tongue of one of the world's votaries? Alas! why should we now heed the idle gossip of society? Let the sacrifice of wasted youth and fresh feelings be sufficient offerings on the shrine of that Moloch. Our life has hitherto been an uneasy dream, let us now frame for ourselves a peaceful reality. Nay, turn not away, dearest Flora; if you care not for my happiness, pause for the sake of that sweet and delicate child whose health and life depend on your cares. Even now she loves you better than her natural parent, and can you deprive her of the source of all her enjoyments?"

Why should I prolong the tale by repeating the thousand arguments which love framed and to which love listened. All the sophistries of pride were silenced by the dictates of affection, and Flora was at last persuaded to study true happiness rather than idle opinion. On a certain fine spring morning, an unusual degree of excitement prevailed in Mrs. Wyndham's usually quiet household. Carriages were waiting in the broad gravel walk, every body was in gala dress, and the children seemed brimful of some mighty secret. But the mystery was speedily unravelled. Never had Miss Lester looked more lovely even in her most brilliant days than on this eventful morning, attired in a dress of simple white, with her dark hair freed from its long imprisonment, and bound in that graceful knot which is so clas-

sical and so utterly unsuited to any but the most symmetrical features. She wore not a single ornament, not even an orange blossom betrayed the meaning of her unwonted attire ; but the tale was all told when the joyful Bertha threw herself into her arms exclaiming, " Oh I am so happy, for now you are my own dear mamma, and I may always love you better than any one in the world."

THE ONE FAULT.

"Trifles make the sum of human things,
And half our misery from our foibles springs."

"Who could have believed it possible," said Charles Wharton, as he sat at the breakfast-table, impatiently awaiting the tardy appearance of his wife; "who could have believed it possible that a single fault should neutralize so many good qualities." He leaned his head on his hand, and a feeling of mortification and disgust arose in his mind, as his eye glanced over the rumpled napkins, ill-cleaned knives, and soiled table-cloth, whose varied stains told of the double duty which it was daily called upon to perform. The entrance of Mrs. Wharton at length disturbed his unpleasant meditations, but he was so thoroughly out of humor, that he scarcely noticed her pleasant face and good-humored smile, while he scanned, with severe look, her morning dress. This, to say truth, was not exactly in the neatest possible style, for Mrs. Wharton did not adopt *strait-laced habits*, until the hour when she might expect visitors. Her usual breakfast attire was a loose wrapper, always the especial abomination of gentlemen, while her beautiful hair, uncombed, and twisted back from her forehead in stiff curl papers, certainly did not add to the elegance of her appearance.

"I wish to Heaven you would wear something decent in the morning, Mary," said her husband, as she took her seat. "I detest those slovenly loose gowns; nothing but habitual ill health is an excuse for wearing them."

"Oh, I have not time to *fix up* for breakfast, Charles."

"You found time when you were at Lebanon last summer, to dress yourself, and you never looked better than in those pretty morning-gowns you then wore."

"One is obliged to be well dressed at such places, where there is so much company, but I cannot afford to wear such handsome muslins at home, so as soon as we returned, I had them altered into dinner dresses."

"It is a pity a woman would not always consider her husband as *company*," said Charles, snappishly, as he took his cup of coffee.

"What is the matter with you, Charles?" said Mrs. Wharton, when the uncomfortable meal was nearly at an end; "I never saw you so out of humor; you have done nothing but scold since I came down stairs."

She spoke with the utmost cheerfulness, and her placid countenance was in singular contrast with the husband's vexed look. It was scarcely possible for a man of Charles Wharton's really good temper to answer harshly, and he replied gravely:

"I have been vexed by petty things, Mary, and they always try the temper more severely than serious troubles. I had an appointment with a gentleman at nine o'clock, and it only wanted ten minutes of that time when you came down to breakfast, so that I have been compelled to disappoint him; then your delay has com-

pletely spoiled every thing—the coffee is cold, the eggs like stones, the toast good for nothing, and this wretched breakfast is set before me on a table-cloth which would disgrace a well-ordered kitchen.”

Mrs. Wharton looked serious as she replied, “I am sorry, Charles, but indeed I was very sleepy this morning, and I only took a short nap after the bell rung for breakfast.”

“And the consequence of your short nap, Mary, is that I must go without my breakfast, and perhaps lose the chance of making a thousand dollars.”

“Why did you not tell me you were in haste?” asked Mrs. Wharton.

“Oh, because I am heartily tired of being obliged to make daily and hourly requests for those things which ought to be habitual to you. There is a want of attention *somewhere*, and it is quite time you discovered where the fault lies, Mary.”

“I am sure I do not know what you mean ; I do every thing I can, but my housekeeping never seems to please you, although almost all my time is spent in looking after the servants.”

“If half that time was bestowed in teaching them some regular system, you would have less care, and I more comfort.”

“What do you want me to do, Charles?”

“That is precisely the thing which I cannot tell you, but which you ought to know already, Mary ; it is not a man’s business to teach housekeeping.”

“I wish we could afford to hire a housekeeper,” sighed Mrs. Wharton, despondingly.

“That is a very vain wish, madam ; you had better

wish for the possession of a little more knowledge on the subject, and then we should not need one."

"Charles, you are never satisfied. I am sure I know a great deal more about housekeeping than most of the young wives of our acquaintance."

"I can only say, then, that I am sorry for the husbands of those that know less," muttered Charles, as he pushed back his chair, and taking his hat, walked sullenly out of the room.

Mrs. Wharton sat musing for a few moments after his departure, and her eyes filled with tears as she recalled his angry words. She felt that he had been unkind, for she thought he was angry at her tardiness, and she was conscious that she would willingly have relinquished the darling morning sleep, if she had known of his engagement. "Why did he not tell me of it?" said she, mentally; "how should I always know what he wishes me to do, unless he tells me? and yet he seems often dissatisfied at some neglect of which I am not conscious, until when too late to remedy it."

Poor Mrs. Wharton! with the best intentions, the kindest feelings, and the most devoted love for her husband, she was yet ignorant of some of those minor duties, without which, happiness cannot be attained. Educated at a fashionable boarding-school, she knew little of the actual mechanism of life. She had gone through the regular routine of studies and accomplishments—had been brought out into society in due form, at the age of sixteen, and after two years spent in the excitements of the gay world, had given her hand to the most agreeable, rather than to the richest of her

suitors, preferring love in a cottage, with Charles Wharton, to indifference in a palace, with her wealthier lover. She was simply a warm-hearted, affectionate, cheerful-tempered girl, whose reflective powers, if she had them, had never been much cultivated, and whose pliant character was yet to be moulded by future circumstances. Her husband had grown up in the midst of an old-fashioned domestic circle. He had seen his mother devoted to her household duties, governing herself and others by a regular system, which made every care seem light, because each fell in its allotted place, and to its allotted person. He had observed his sisters acquiring all the elegant refinements of a finished education, while they gradually learned from example, rather than precept, the womanly habits which are only to be gained in a well-ordered household. He had been so accustomed to neatness and order, that he scarcely noticed their presence, but if he was accidentally thrown into circumstances where they were wanting, their absence soon taught him how essential they were to his daily comfort. In short, he was the son of a sensible and good mother, and her influence had made him worthy of as sensible and good a wife. Mary Lee's pretty face and frank simplicity of character, had attracted him when she first entered society. Her unalterable good humor was an additional charm, and when he found her possessed of a fund of sound practical good sense, which needed only time to develop itself, he hesitated not to offer to her acceptance his heart and hand. During the first intoxication of youthful love, he could see no defects in her character, no spots in the sun which shed so much light upon his

existence. Her cheerful smiles, her bright face, her bird-like voice, all acted upon him like enchantment, and with a degree of enthusiasm which usually ends in disappointment, he exalted her into an object of adoration. He was ten years her senior, and the light-hearted girl received his homage with an elation of spirit which tended to increase rather than subdue the levity of her disposition.

I wonder if it ever occurred to a discontented husband that much of the discomfort of his married life might be attributed to this over-estimation which is so general a characteristic of the days of courtship. To man, love is but the interlude between the acts of a busy life—the cares of business, or the severe studies of a profession are the *duties* of his existence, while the attentions which he bestows on the young and fair being whom he has chosen to share his future lot, are the actual pleasures of his life. He comes to her weary with the sordid anxieties or the oppressive intellectual labors in which he has been engaged, and he finds her ever the gentle minister to his happiness, while the atmosphere which surrounds her, is one of such purity and peace, that all his better nature is awakened by her presence. What marvel, then, that he should make her the idol of his dreams, and enthrone her on high in his imagination, as the good genius of his life? Wilfully blind to every defect in her character, he views her through the medium of his own excited feelings, and thus, like one who should pretend to judge of the real landscape by beholding its reflection in a Claude Lorraine glass, he sees only the softened-lineaments of the actual being. Then comes the

hour of disenchantment. In the familiar intercourse of wedded life, he ceases to be the worshipper at an idol's shrine. The love still exists, perhaps even increases in its fervor, but the blind worship is at an end ; she is now his fellow traveller through the rugged and dusty path of life, and she must bear with him, the heat and burden of the day.

But it often happens that the past has not been without its evil influence upon her. She has been taken from among her companions, and set on high as an object of adoration ; the intellect of man has been humbled before her, and her very caprices have been laws to him. Is it to be wondered at, if she cannot at once resign her queenly station, and become the gentle and submissive and forbearing woman ? Is it strange that the reproof or the cold rebuke of him who once taught her that she was all perfection, should sound strangely to her ear, and fall with bitterness upon her heart ? The change which takes place in the mere *manners* of him who was once the devoted lover, is hard to understand. "I cannot describe," said a lady, who was by no means remarkable for sensitiveness of feeling, "I cannot describe how unhappy I felt the first time after my marriage, that my husband put on his hat and walked out of the house to his daily business, without bidding me farewell. I thought of it all the morning, and wondered whether he was displeased with me, nor until I had questioned him on the subject, did I discover, (what was perhaps equally painful to me then,) that he was so occupied with his business, as to have forgotten it." Many a misunderstanding in married life has arisen out of circumstances as trifling

as the one just recorded ; for when a woman has been made to believe that she is the sole object of her lover's thoughts, it is difficult for her to realize that the act which transfers to him the future guardianship of her happiness, exonerates him from those minute attentions, which have hitherto contributed so much to her enjoyment. Do not mistake me, gentle reader ; I do not mean to say as some have ventured to assert, that "Courtship is a woman's Paradise, and Marriage her Purgatory," for many a blessed experience would quickly give the lie to any such false theory ; but I would merely suggest whether this exaltation of a mistress into something *more than woman*, before marriage, does not tend to produce a reaction of feeling, which is apt to degrade her into something less than the rest of her sex afterwards ; and whether he who saw no faults in his "ladye-love " will not be likely to see more than she ever possessed, in his wife ?

Charles Wharton had certainly committed this common error. Loving his mother and sisters with the most devoted affection, he had learned to regard them as models of feminine virtue and grace, yet there was something of sombre and grave in their characters, which did not exactly agree with his *beau-ideal* of woman,

"Skilled alike to dazzle and to please."

He was therefore peculiarly susceptible to the charms of playful wit and gayety in his beloved Mary, and finding her thus in possession of the only gift which was wanting in his home circle, he, by a very natural

error, attributed to her all the other qualities which he found there in such perfection. He had created an imaginary being, who should unite the lighter graces with the nobler virtues, and fascinated by the beauty, and the sunny temper of Miss Lee, he found no difficulty in embodying in her form his ideal mistress. For a time he was perfectly enchanted, but the familiar intercourse of married life at length discovered some defects in the character of the young and light-hearted wife, and Wharton, feeling as men are apt to do,

“As charm by charm unwinds,
That robed their idol,”

was almost tempted to believe that he had utterly deceived himself.

But in this opinion he was as far wrong as when he had fancied her all perfection. Mary possessed all the material for forming an estimable woman, but she was young, thoughtless, and untaught. She was one of a family who lived but for society, and whose deportment to each other was an exemplification of the old copy-book apophthegm, “Familiarity breeds contempt.” The self-respect which inculcates personal neatness as a duty—the respect towards each other, which should be as carefully cherished between brothers and sisters, as the affection which, in truth, will not long exist without it—were entirely unknown among them. In society, they were models of propriety, but, in the domestic circle, there was a want of method, and a neglect of neatness, which could not fail to be injurious to every member of the family. I may be

mistaken, but, it seems to me, that habitual slovenliness cannot fail to have its effect upon the mental as well as the bodily habits. To a well balanced mind, external order seems as essential as intellectual purity, and however great may be the genius, there is surely something wanting to a perfect equilibrium of the faculties, when the body—through the medium of which ideas must necessarily be conveyed to the mind—is habitually neglected, and consequently exposed to disgusting rather than agreeable images. But whatever may be the effect of a want of neatness on one's individual character, there is no doubt as to its influence on others. No man can have a proper respect for female purity and delicacy, when he has been accustomed, from childhood, to witness slovenly habits in his mother and sisters; for that chivalric feeling towards the gentler sex, which has preserved many a man from the early attacks of vice, never exists in the heart of him who has had the barriers of refinement broken down, ere he left his childhood's home.

Mrs. Wharton was not deficient in personal cleanliness; few women are found guilty of so revolting a fault; but she wanted personal neatness and order. She had learned to treat her husband as she was accustomed to do her brothers, and while she never appeared before company in an *undress*, scarcely ever honored him with any thing else. Her breakfast dress has already been described, and if the day happened to be rainy, or any thing else occurred to induce her to deny herself to visitors, she generally greeted her husband's eye in the same loose and flowing robes at

dinner, as well as tea. Her total ignorance of every thing like method, was visible throughout all her domestic arrangements. Instead of *directing* her servants, she only *reproved* them, for she found it much easier to scold when a thing was *ill done*, than to attend to having it *well* done. Her domestics soon became familiar with her ignorance of the details of housekeeping, and availed themselves of it to neglect their duty as much as possible, and, when she began to add to her other defects, that of *indolence*, her household fell into a state which cannot be better designated than by the expressive Irish word, "*Through-otherness*."

The scene which I have already described, was but the beginning of domestic discord. Disappointed and annoyed, Mr. Wharton would not deign to tell her the exact nature of her fault, and point out the mode of remedy, while the wife was daily pained by some ebullition of ill-humor, which made her sensible of an error committed, without enabling her to understand how it might be avoided for the future. There was a want of confidence between them, which threatened the most painful results to their future comfort, for while Charles was daily becoming more discontented with her ignorance of system, she, conscious that she really took pains to please him, was gradually acquiring the belief that he no longer loved her. There was no want of will to do right, but she sadly needed some kind hand to guide her into the true path, and thus, while each possessed, in an unusual degree, the elements of happiness, the poison of distrust was embittering the existence of both. The husband became

moody at home, and soon began to seek, in the excitements of society, oblivion of the discomforts of his own fireside, while the wife, feeling herself neglected and forlorn, gave herself up to despondency, and became more careless than ever of her personal appearance. The bright beauty of her countenance vanished, and in the hollow-cheeked, sad-eyed, dowdyish woman, who sat, hour after hour, in a great arm-chair, devouring the last new novel, it was scarcely possible to recognize the bright-faced and cheerful-tempered bride of the once devoted Charles Wharton.

Such was the state of things at the end of the first two years of their married life. Mrs. Wharton, disheartened and dispirited, took little interest in her family concerns, while her husband, accustomed to seek his enjoyments elsewhere, found always something to censure at home. Fortunately his good principles kept him from the haunts of dissipation, or he might have added another to the list of those who have been driven, by an *ill-ordered home*, to a *well-ordered* tavern or billiard-room. His mother had long seen and mourned his evident disquiet, and, while she partially divined its cause, was in doubt as to the course which she ought to pursue. She was aware of the danger of interference in the domestic concerns of another, but she could not bear to see her son and his sweet-tempered wife so estranged from each other.

"You are unhappy, Charles," said the old lady, one day, when they were alone. "Will you not tell me the cause of your trouble? is it your business?"

"No, mother, my business was never in a more prosperous condition."

"Then something is wrong at home, my son ; can you not confide in me?"

"Oh, there is nothing to tell ; Mary is one of the best-hearted and good-tempered creatures in the world, but—"

"But what, Charles?"

"She has one fault, mother, and it is about the worst she could have."

"The worst, Charles? is she ill-tempered, or deficient in affection for you? does she run into extravagant excesses for dress or company?"

"Why, mother, you know she has none of these defects?"

"Then, Charles, she has not the *worst* faults she might have."

"Well, well, perhaps I used too strong a term, but really I am heart-sick—I have a house, but no home—I have servants, but no service from them—I have a wife, but no helpmeet ; I cannot yet afford to keep a house-keeper, and until I can, I see no probability of finding comfort at home. Mary is as ignorant as a baby, of all that the mistress of a family ought to know, and I am tired of living at the mercy of a pack of careless domestics."

"Mary has been unfortunate in not learning such duties in her early home, Charles, but certainly there is no difficulty in acquiring a knowledge of them now ; did you ever try to teach her?"

"Try to teach housekeeping, mother? no, indeed ; I should as soon think of teaching a woman how to put on her dress ; who ever heard of a man teaching his wife how to keep house?"

"I will tell you, Charles, what you might have taught her; you have such habits of order, and are so systematic in your arrangement of time, that you could easily have imparted to her your notions on such subjects, without appearing to meddle with woman's affairs, and when she had once learned them, half her task would have been accomplished."

"A woman ought not to be married till she knows her duties. The parent who allows a daughter to marry, when conscious that she is utterly ignorant of these, is guilty of an actual imposition upon the luckless husband."

"You would scarcely expect a parent to blazon his child's defects, Charles; a man chooses a wife for himself—he marries with his eyes open."

"No, I'll be hanged if he does! he is blinded by a pretty face, at first, and then the lady and her friends take good care to noose him, before he gets his eyes open."

"You are angry, Charles, and I am afraid you have used bitter words, rather than arguments, with poor Mary."

"Mother, I am as unhappy as ever was mortal man; I love home—I love my wife, but when I seek both, I am disgusted by the sight of a disordered house and a slovenly woman, and my feelings are instantly changed into anger and almost dislike. I shall break up house-keeping in the spring; I can't bear it any longer."

"I think I could remedy the evil of which you complain, if I was only sure that Mary would not resent my interference."

"Resent! why, mother, she never resents any thing;

"I never heard an angry word from her in my life, and I have given her many a one." Mrs. Wharton looked significantly at her son, as he made this acknowledgment, and smiled, as she promised to make the attempt.

It happened, not long after the conversation above narrated, that Charles Wharton was taken seriously ill, and his mother became an inmate of his family until his recovery. There is nothing which so effectually subdues wrathful feelings, and obliterates the recollection of past unkindness, as the touch of sickness. When death sits watching beside the bed of pain, the animosity of a lifelong enemy seems like a sin against the charities of life, and how much more vain and wicked seem the angry bickerings of those whom love has bound together! Charles saw nothing of the sloven in the attentive and devoted nurse, who untiringly ministered to his wants, and Mary felt more happiness, notwithstanding her apprehensions, than she had enjoyed for many months. But Mrs. Wharton, the mother, now obtained a clear insight into the difficulties which had marred their domestic comfort, and, no sooner was Charles restored to convalescence, than she set herself to the task of subduing them. Fortunately for her scheme, Mary possessed that perfect good temper which was not to be ruffled even by the interference of a mother-in-law, and Mrs. Wharton had sufficient tact to know just how far that interference could be carried with success. In the course of the frequent confidential conversations which occurred between the mother and wife, during the time when both were engrossed in the care of the invalid, Mary learned much of her husband's

early tastes and habits, of which she had before been utterly ignorant. She heard, but not in the language of personal rebuke, of his peculiar notions of order and system, and her mind, which had unconsciously acquired habits of reflection and thought in her hours of solitude, began to understand the benefit of a regular and well-ordered plan of life. But still she was at a loss to know exactly how to arrange such a plan, and it was not until she had summoned sufficient moral courage, (smile not, reader, it required no small share of it,) to explain her dilemma, and ask the aid of her mother-in-law, that she was enabled to enter upon her new course of life.

Following the advice of Mrs. Wharton, the first bad habit which she corrected, was that of indulging in morning slumbers. Early rising afforded her the time to attire herself with neatness and propriety, while it also gave her the opportunity of visiting the important domain of the 'Land of Cookery,' and of inspecting the arrangement of the morning meal. It required a serious struggle with that hardest of all tyrants, Indolence, but Mrs. Wharton soon found that bad habits are like the bonds with which the Lilliputians fettered the slumbering Gulliver—united, it was impossible to break the fragile threads, but if taken singly each could be severed by the movement of a finger. One by one she contended against her former faults. It required not only resolution, but the rarer virtue of perseverance, to carry all her good intentions into effect, for many a week and month elapsed, ere she could fully arrange the mechanism of her domestic concerns. In truth, it is no small task to regulate the microcosm of a house-

hold—to manage in such a manner as to bestow the greatest proportion of comfort upon each individual—to divide the duties of domestics, so as to secure the performance of business in its proper time, and the enjoyment of leisure when the tasks are over—to remember and provide for the wants of all—to study the peculiar tastes of each—to preserve order and neatness throughout the multifarious departments of domestic life—and to do all this without neglecting the claims of friendship and society—without relinquishing the cultivation of one's mind, and the study of one's own heart—without becoming a mere household drudge. It is no easy task, yet it may be done; the first steps in this, as in all other labors, are the most difficult; only employ the aid of system in the beginning, and all may be fully accomplished.

* * * * *

It was a fine spring morning; a bright fire was burning in the polished grate, before which sat Mr. Wharton, deeply engaged in the study of the newspaper, while a neat servant was arranging the breakfast on a table-cloth as white as the eggs which she had just set upon it. A moment afterwards Mrs. Wharton entered, looking prettier than ever, and as she took her seat at the table, she drew down the wristbands of her well-fitting morning-gown, while a plate of hot biscuits, which just then made their appearance, told her recent employment. Charles threw aside his paper, and turned to the table with a cheerful look of perfect contentment. There was nothing picturesque in the group, but it was a scene of comfort and happiness, and, to the believers in that 'Dietetic' philosophy,

which holds that the enjoyment or misery, nay, even the morality or immorality of the day may be traced to the effects resulting from a good or bad breakfast, such a scene could not but augur well for the parties. At the moment when Charles was discussing the merits of his third biscuit, and sipping, at intervals, his fragrant coffee, a stranger was announced, who wished to see him on business. Slowly and reluctantly he left the room, and after the lapse of a few minutes, returned with a most whimsical expression of face.

"What do you suppose that man wanted, Mary?" he asked, as he again addressed himself to his breakfast.

"I am sure I cannot imagine, Charles."

"He wanted to know at what price I was willing to sell this house."

"Sell this house, Charles? surely you do not think of such a thing," exclaimed Mrs. Wharton, in undisguised alarm.

"He says I told him last summer, that I intended breaking up housekeeping, and should offer it for sale this spring."

"What answer did you give him?" asked Mrs. Wharton, growing a little pale.

"I told him I had changed my mind," was the quiet reply.

"Do you really wish to alter our mode of life, dear Charles?"

"No, indeed I do not, my little wife; I would not give the comforts of such a home as I possess, for all the splendors which money can purchase at a hotel. I like to be beneath my own roof-tree, and really believe

that in any house but my own, I should exclaim with the poet Dante :

‘ Salt is the bread by others given, and hard
Th’ ascent of others’ stairs.’ ”

“ I am glad to hear you say so, for really I should regret any change.”

“ But you would have much less trouble if we were at board.”

“ And much less enjoyment too, dear Charles ; ‘ life’s cares ’ are certainly very like ‘ life’s comforts,’ in the domestic circle, whatever they may be elsewhere. I assure you that the gratification which a woman derives from the consciousness that she is essential to the happiness and even to the daily pleasures of those she loves, fully compensates her for all trouble.”

“ It is a pity all wives did not think so, Mary.”

“ It is a pity all females were not taught this truth before marriage, Charles ; I have not forgotten my own past errors, nor the kindness of your good mother, to whose wise counsels I owe my present happiness.”

“ Nor should you forget, sweet one, the energy and patience and self-denial of my own dear wife, who accomplished what few women would have been willing to do, when she persevered in conquering the evil effects of early indulgence.”

“ Call it early *neglect*, Charles ; that mother sadly mistakes the nature of indulgence, who, to save her daughter from trifling discomforts in youth, allows her to grow up in ignorance of those duties which, in after life, are so essential to her welfare.”

THE LADY'S LESSON;

OR, HOW TO LOSE A LOVER.

“Hadst thou but shown
One touch of pity for thy sister's lot,
I had forgiven thee all ; but thus to spurn
A creature, framed and fashioned like to thee
In all her delicate womanhood ;—fie ! fie !
Thou didst belie thy tenderness of nature.”

Old Play.

It was a chill tempestuous evening in autumn. The wind rose in fitful gusts, now uttering a long low wail, like the voice of human suffering, and again swelling into the loud fierce tone of threatening wrath, while the dead leaves, whirled from the dry branches by the force of the tempest, swept by with the rushing sound of some winged creature, and the sudden bursts of rain dashed with the force of hailstones against the unsheltered casement. It was a night when the poor man's cold hearthstone and scanty spread board look doubly desolate :—a night when the child of fortune gathers around him all the comforts and luxuries of life, feeling their value increased tenfold by the force of contrast. In a handsome apartment, whose rich carpet, silken hangings, and costly furniture bore witness to the presence of wealth, while the gilt harp, the open piano, the velvet-covered books, and the delicate *bijouterie* scattered around spoke no less of taste and elegance,

sat two persons who seemed peculiarly fitted to dwell amid such scenes. The lady was young and very beautiful. Her simple but carefully arranged dress displayed the contour of a superb figure, while her attitude as she bent over the harp was one of exquisite grace. In seeming idleness of mood, she lightly touched the strings, and murmured rather than sung the touching words of an old ballad. Her eyes, downcast and shrouded from view by her heavy black lashes, were never once raised to the face of her companion, although the rich color which gradually deepened in her cheek might have betrayed her consciousness of his ardent gaze. It was a subject for a painter—that stately chamber, with its picturesque adornments, visible by the soft moonlight of a shaded lamp, while the beautiful creature who occupied the foreground of the picture was not more worthy of the artist's pencil than was the noble, thoughtful-looking man, who, half reclining on a sofa, watched her every movement with a loving eye.

Indeed, charming as was the lady, there was far more for both painter and poet to study in the face and mind of her companion. Charles Lilbourne had been, all his life, a dreamer rather than a student. A large fortune which he inherited at an early age, had enabled him to shun the sordid paths of worldly business, and the gratification of his intellectual tastes had occupied his early manhood. Gifted with fine talents, he also possessed those strong passions which are ever the attendants on mental vigor, but his noble elevation of soul guarded him from the errors that often await an excitable and impulsive youth. His intellect seemed

to purify the atmosphere of his moral nature. Virtue in her homeliest garb was to him "altogether lovely;" and beauty in all her witchery was an object of loathing if the soul of good was wanting. His poetic fancy shed its own rich light over every thing in life. Susceptible in the highest degree, he invested the beings whom he met in society with attributes that rarely exist in the grosser air of worldliness. He opened his heart to them, led them into the vestibule of his affections, and even gave them glimpses of the light which glowed behind the veil, when the sudden discovery of some weakness, some defect, some want of sympathy, would awaken him from his dream and leave him distrusting and desolate. Frequent experiences of this nature had made him somewhat reserved in manners. He had been so often disappointed that he almost doubted the existence of truthfulness in the world. He had indulged in the reveries of philosophic sentiment until he became morbidly fastidious, and learned, too late, that the intellectual voluptuary, no less than the mere sensualist, must suffer the penalty of excessive indulgence. He had been a traveller in all lands, and had dwelt amid all nations. He had ripened his fancies and feelings beneath the sunshine of all climes, and now, unsatisfied and lonely, he had returned to breathe once more his native air, in the vain hope of renewing the simple tastes and habits of his boyhood.

When Charles Lilbourne went abroad his cousin Julia was a child, a pretty, pettish, little creature, who sat on his knee and teased him for *bonbons*. After fifteen years of absence he returned to find his plaything transformed into the elegant and admired woman. If he

had remembered her at all, it had been only as an unformed girl, and no vision of her surpassing beauty, her graceful self-possession, her queenly dignity, ever crossed his imagination. He met her with wonder,—almost with awe. She seemed to him like the development of some lovely dream—the expansion of some dim, vague fancy of his youth. He remembered her artless childhood, and he immediately associated his ideas of the past with those of the present, until he had invested his beautiful cousin with all the loveliest attributes of feminine sweetness. True to his susceptible nature, while he fancied that he was only watching the phases of a new character, he became a lover and a worshipper, yet his idolatry, unlike the homage of a common mind, rendered him doubly sensitive to any defect in the object of his devotion. Julia Grey possessed no extraordinary mental or moral gifts. With some talent, but much more tact, she adapted herself to the tastes of others, with a degree of skill scarcely compatible with perfect truthfulness. Fond of admiration, she sought to win it by other means than merely her great beauty. She loved to make a decided impression upon her admirers—to say or do something which should remain fixed in their hearts for ever. She had sufficient sentiment to prefer the homage of the affections to the mere tribute of the senses, and she liked to bring her followers to the verge of the cliff whence they might take the Lover's Leap, even if she felt assured that they would turn back from its descent. She was a cheerful, intelligent, agreeable girl, without any fixed purpose in life, except to marry when she should become satiated with the pleasures of society: without any fixed principles

of action, except the desire of pleasing and the fear of offending conventional rules: without any permanent affections except those awakened by kindred; and without the slightest idea of her own responsibility to a Higher Power for the gifts and graces which she used merely as the adornments of a passing existence. Such was Julia; such are most women when their scholastic education is completed, and they are sent into society to be moulded or remodelled by circumstances.

On the evening already alluded to, Charles Lilbourne was in one of his most dreamy moods. The genial atmosphere he breathed, the luxurious appliances which surrounded him, the beauty which was before him, and the feeling of comfort, which is always experienced, when the war of discordant elements without is contrasted with the perfect harmony within, had combined to throw him into a delicious reverie. An artificial climate like that of the sunny south was around him, the works of Italy's most gifted children looked down upon him from the pictured walls, the voice of song was gently whispering near, and beside him, in living, breathing loveliness, was a realization of his fairest dream of beauty. What marvel, therefore, if he was for a few brief moments wrapped in Elysium? what marvel if, with half-closed eyes and languid frame, he reclined in that sweet indolence of mind and body while such gentle influences lulled his soul into a trance of pleasure? Fearful of disturbing the current of vague, sweet fancies, he spoke not, stirred not, and even the entrance of a servant with some message which caused Julia to break the chain of a gentle melody, scarcely aroused him.

"How beautiful she is," sighed he, as the door closed behind the fair girl; "how beautiful and how good! can it be that the happiness of winning such a heart is reserved for me? Can it be, that after a fruitless search through the wide world, I am yet to find perfect sympathy in my childhood's home?"

Just at this moment his ear caught the low pleading tone of some one speaking in the hall.

"Indeed, Miss Grey," said the person, "it was impossible to finish the dress this evening; I have been obliged to make up mourning for a lady who has just lost her only child, and I knew you would not mind the disappointment of a few hours."

"But I do mind it," was the sharp reply of Miss Grey. "It seems to me that somebody is sure to die when I want any sewing done; I am sure there is no necessity for any great haste in making up mourning; people don't want to go out at such times, and they need not be so particular about the color of their dresses."

"I can have your dress completed by Wednesday morning," said the first speaker.

"That will not answer; I must have it to-morrow evening: I want it in time for a party which I must attend."

"I shall scarcely be able to get it done without working all night, but I will do my best."

"Well, let me have it at any rate by eight o'clock to-morrow evening, and be sure not to disappoint me. I will send you the lace trimming in the morning; the weather is so dark and stormy, I am afraid to trust you with it to-night, for you might lose it or be robbed of it on your way home. Why didn't you come before dark?"

"Mother was not well, and I could not leave her sooner."

"Oh, I remember, she is blind and gives you a great deal of trouble ; I will send the lace in the morning, and you know how I want it laid on the skirt and sleeves."

Lilbourne heard the hall door close, and the next moment, with a smile of gentle benignity, Julia re-entered the room.

"I am completely chilled," she exclaimed, as she drew her chair to the fire ; "the hall is like a north-west passage, and these work-people are so dreadfully tedious."

Charles had risen from his indolent position, and now with knit brow and folded arms, stood, leaning against the chimney-piece.

"With whom were you talking ?" he coldly asked, while the keen glance of his dark eyes betrayed his interest in the answer.

"It was a poor dress-maker, whom I employ out of charity," said Julia, with a meek air of conscious rectitude ; "she is poor and supports her blind mother, and I therefore patronize her, instead of employing a more fashionable *modiste*."

"I dare say you are quite satisfied with her skill, or else your taste would overcome your charity."

"I believe you are right, cousin Charles," was the apparently frank reply ; "but Clara certainly has an innate idea of the 'fitness of things ;' tell me if you ever saw any thing more perfectly adapted to the figure than the dress I am now wearing ?"

"You should not ask such questions, Julia, they

break the sweet illusions of fancy. Until you suggested a different idea, I really thought that it was the figure which so beautifully moulded the dress, and now I am afraid I shall never admire the admirable proportions of your fine form without thinking of the poor little dress-maker."

There was a tone of lurking sarcasm in this remark, which puzzled and annoyed Julia; but, pretending not to perceive any latent meaning, she gayly answered: "Take care how you waste thoughts on a pretty woman *absent*, when you should be absorbed in attentions to a prettier one *present*; we women never forgive such an act of *lèse-majesté*."

"Is the poor girl pretty?"

"Quite so; with soft dove-like eyes and beautiful brown hair; but she is pale and thin, and lacks the roundness of healthy symmetry."

"Where does she live?"

"Somewhere in —— street, quite near your hotel, I believe."

"Have you never visited her in the course of your *patronage*?"

"Certainly not; I always send for her to come to me; I would not for the world enter one of those close and crowded places where poor people huddle together; I am sure I should catch some frightful fever. I am laughed at by many of my acquaintances for my folly in employing such persons, and I don't know what would be said if I were seen going to such places to seek them."

Charles Lilbourne was silent, and as Julia drew her harp again towards her, he fell into another fit of mus-

ing. But now his thoughts were apparently less agreeable, for the expression of languid enjoyment in his countenance had given place to a stern coldness which Julia could neither comprehend nor dissipate. That night he returned sad and dissatisfied to his home. Captivated by Julia's beauty, he had, as usual, believed her gifted with all womanly feelings and sympathies, and now, like all seekers after perfection, the discovery of a single flaw in the diamond made him regard it as utterly false and worthless. Indeed Julia could scarcely have done any thing which would so suddenly have disenchanted him. He had witnessed her selfish gratification of her own whims even at the expense of another's comfort—he had listened to a falsehood from her lips, for he well knew that the party for which she required the dress would not take place till the day after that which she had named, and that therefore the requisition which would deprive the poor seamstress of her nightly rest was as unnecessary as it was cruel—he had seen her shrinking from a moment's exposure to that inclemency from which she had not sought to screen a woman as delicate as herself—he had heard her express fears for the safety of a paltry lace trimming, while she scrupled not to suffer the unprotected and timid girl to return alone through the darkness and tempest to her distant home ; in fine, he had discovered a want of womanly tenderness in the character of his lovely cousin ; and when a man has learned the falsehood of a single attribute with which his fancy had invested the lady of his love, it is wonderful how acute he becomes in his scrutiny of all her gifts.

As he entered his well-furnished apartments in

●

—— House, he wove a chain of thought which held him prisoner for several hours. He reflected on the vast amount of human suffering which is the result solely of human selfishness, and as he contrasted the condition of the brilliant and beautiful despot whom he had just left, with that of the patient, humble dress-maker, he certainly felt more interest in the slave than in the ruler. He rose and approached the window, intending to close it previous to retiring for the night, when his eye fell upon a solitary taper twinkling in an apartment of a neighboring abode. The houses in the adjoining street were arranged for the accommodation of the poor, and the usual accumulation of high, narrow tenements, pieced out by rear-buildings and sheds, deformed the prospect from Lilbourne's window. It was in one of those rude domicils, the narrow casement of which was scarcely fifty feet from him, that he now saw the light. So common and trivial a circumstance at any other time would scarcely have claimed a thought, but in his present frame of mind it was calculated to interest him deeply. He remembered his cousin's allusion to the dress-maker's abode, and he felt an innate conviction that the lonely taper was lighting her to her weary task. His curiosity was fully awakened. He saw a shadow upon the muslin curtain which shrouded the window, and as a change in her position brought the occupant of the room directly before the casement, the figure of a woman bending low over a piece of needlework was clearly defined. As he gazed, a feeling of benevolent indignation took possession of his mind. A degree of interest, so strong that he might have attributed it to the secret influence of some mysterious

●

magnetism, if he had not been fully aware of the wonderfully attractive power of sympathy, chained him to the spot. With his eye fixed on that solitary taper and the shadow of that weary watcher, he dreamed away the hours, weaving a mingled web of sorrow and romance, until the gray dawn of morning flecked the dark vault of heaven. Then, and not till then, was the taper extinguished, and a pale wan face approached the casement. Lilbourne gazed unseen upon the fragile-looking creature, who, throwing aside the curtain, raised the window, and leaned forth, as if to catch one breath of fresh unpolluted air. He saw no beauty in the pallid countenance, but he read the lines of habitual suffering, he observed the traces of exhaustion—he noticed her suffused eye, and as the young girl resumed her labors, he felt disposed to curse the selfish vanity of those who win the flattery of fools at the price of a sister's health and life.

It was late on the following evening when Lilbourne entered the drawing-room where his beautiful cousin awaited him. His manner was abstracted and cold, and Julia, vexed by his pertinacious resistance to her wiles, became exacting and petulant. It was evident to both that something had weakened the spell—that some ingredient had been mixed in the circean cup which had been so carefully mingled by beauty's hand. Lilbourne was disappointed, and of course unreasonable. A man of more frankness would have disclosed his feelings, and sought to awaken a better spirit in the woman he loved; but Charles only felt that he had been deceived, and he scorned the idea of teaching her that which ought to be the habitual rule of her conduct.

His mood was but little changed when, on the following night, he accompanied Julia to the party for which the new dress had been prepared. Never had she looked more beautiful—never had her superb figure been more finely displayed—never had her attire been more tasteful and elegant. But Lilbourne looked on the rich garb only to remember the solitary watcher, and the single taper which had burned through that long night, in order to complete these trappings of vanity; he gazed on the fair face only to recall the attenuated features of the less fortunate woman who was at once the priestess and the victim on the shrine of fashion.

Piqued at his unwonted indifference, Julia sought to arouse his jealousy, and accordingly she assumed all her brilliancy. But, whether whirling through the mazes of the giddy dance, or uttering the ready repartee which had all the cutting hardness as well as glitter of the diamond—whether bestowing the ready smile upon the retailer of small wit, or listening with assumed interest to some pretended sentimentalist, she never forgot that her chief object was to increase the power of her spells over her cousin. Until now, Julia Grey had never known any thing like a genuine attachment. To the spoiled and flattered belle, Charles Lilbourne, with his fine intellectual gifts, his poetic temper, his chivalrous devotion to woman, and his thoughtfulness of character, was a new and delightful study. It was impossible that she, brought up in the atmosphere of worldliness, should perfectly appreciate him, or entirely sympathize with him, but she certainly preferred him to all others; and the influence of his character, if properly exerted, would in all probability have finally

wrought a decided change in hers. She set herself to the task of pleasing him; she studied his peculiarities, she adopted his tone of thought, she acquired those pretty phrases of sentimental diction which are always so agreeable from the lips of a pretty woman, and already her work was half done, when one little trait, so habitual as entirely to escape her own attention—one evidence of selfishness and unwomanly disregard to the comfort of another, spoiled her plans and marred her happiness. That evening and that dress completed his disenchantment. The wan face of the poor seamstress seemed to meet his eye whenever he looked on the gorgeously attired belle, and Julia Grey no longer possessed a lover in her eccentric cousin.

* * * * *

Some two years afterwards, the cousins were again seated in the apartment where we first found them. The same rich decorations were around them, the piano was open as if the lady had just turned from it, but the harp stood silent in its nook, and something seemed to tell of change in the hearts and minds of both. There was a mournfulness in Julia's eye, as she glanced around the room, and the changeful color on her cheek told of some suppressed emotion, but her brow was calm, and her beautiful lip displayed a placid smile, as if she had worn the mask of fashion so long that her features had become moulded into its false expression. Charles Lilbourne was grave and thoughtful as usual, but there was a fire in his eye and a nervous movement of his heavy brows, as if some hidden feeling was at work within him.

"To-morrow, Julia, to-morrow," said Lilbourne,

"you will be another creature ; to-morrow you will assume the duties and responsibilities of a wife—you will take upon yourself the keeping of another's happiness : are you not startled when you reflect upon the magnitude of your life-long task ?"

"It is too late to reflect now," replied Julia, while a laugh of forced gayety echoed strangely from her lips; "I dare say I shall be very happy, I have outlived the age of romance, and, as I expect little sympathy, I shall meet with few disappointments. Mr. Devere is rich, complaisant, and kind ; he loves to spend his vast fortune, and he will be as proud of his wife as of his blood horses."

"For Heaven's sake, Julia, how can you talk in so frivolous a strain ?"

"I tell you, Charles, I have survived my own affections ; the time has been when I could have given up wealth and fashion, and all the homage of society, for the love of one true heart, but the hour has gone by. I respect Mr. Devere's many virtues, I am willing to tolerate his eccentricities and defects, and I have a most decided preference for his large estate. I expect nothing beyond what his fortune and good temper insure to me, and I have very philosophically adapted my ideas of happiness to my capacity for obtaining it. Now, say no more on the subject, Charles ; you know not, you cannot know how painful are the feelings you awaken. I have chosen my path and mean to pursue it fearlessly."

"You are a strange creature, I wish I could understand you."

"You might once have fathomed the depths of my

nature, Charles, but you scorned to do so ; the weeds thrown up to the surface deterred you from seeking the pearls that might have been found beneath, and now they will never be brought to light. Leave me to be happy in my own way, and God grant that you may find greater happiness in yours."

"Julia, do you know that I also am engaged to be married?"

"To whom?" was the earnest, almost passionate question ; for no woman ever listens coldly to such tidings respecting one whom she has loved.

"Do you remember the dress you wore at Mrs. Lawton's party?"

"Perfectly well ; more by token, as the Scotch say, that it enabled me to attract the admiration of the somewhat fastidious Mr. Devere."

"Indeed ! well, that confirms my belief in the doctrine of compensations, for as that dress won you a husband, it certainly lost you a lover. When I heard you coldly condemn your sister woman to unbroken labor and privation in order that you might obtain the trappings of vanity, I felt that you were not all my fancy had painted—not all that I desired in woman. I watched from my window the progress of that solitary task ; I saw the gray dawn of morning break upon the sleepless eyes of that pale girl, who toiled for a blind and helpless mother ; and when I saw you robed as the idol of fashion, my thoughts went back to her who was the victim as well as the priestess of your vanity, and the spell of your beauty became powerless. I sought out the aid of a friend, an aged and benevolent woman, who might be my agent in

rescuing your dependant from the thralldom of necessity. For the girl's sake no less than for my own, I avoided all personal interference, and when I found that her father's bankruptcy and sudden death, had thus reduced the family to poverty, I feigned to have discovered that I had been long indebted to the deceased parent ; I immediately transferred to them the sum of five thousand dollars, and fancied that I had managed most adroitly to secure them at least from want. But what was my surprise when I found that the noble girl, immediately upon receiving the money, had handed it over to her father's creditors, believing it to be their just due. This awakened a new and more elevated interest in my heart, and, in company with my old friend, I visited her humble abode. I shall never forget the picture of that small room, with its plain but neatly kept furniture, the snowy bed where lay the sightless mother, and the little table covered with the rich silks, which were to minister to the wants of the poor by pampering the pride of the rich. I saw the pale workwoman, I watched the hectic flush of her thin cheek, I heard the quick short cough which is ever as a churchyard knell to the sedentary and laborious. Will you forgive me, Julia, if I add, that as I compared the patient sufferer with the brilliant belle, I accused you of the selfishness and cruelty which had reduced her to the brink of the grave? You were only one of the many who had thus tasked her strength, but you should have known better."

"I see it all, Charles ; but you should have remembered that we sometimes sin through ignorance rather than wilfulness. Go on."

"I found refinement, good sense, delicacy of perception, and high-mindedness beneath the garb of poverty. By the aid of the old lady, Clara Wilmot was placed in a situation which secured her from such hard tasks, and as the governess to my friend's grandchildren, she assumed a position better suited to her talents and virtues. I assure you, coz, she understands the 'fitness of things' no less in intellectual than in personal graces."

"And so you are going to marry her; who could have supposed that after all your fastidious notions about women, you would find perfection in the character of a poor sewing girl?"

"I have not found perfection, Julia, but I have learned to be satisfied with less. Clara has none of the brilliant beauty which once captivated my fancy, but her soft sweet eyes are full of womanly tenderness, and her brow wears the serenity of high thoughts. She understands the waywardness of my susceptible nature; she knows how to modulate the harmony as well as to soften down the discords which such a peculiar temperament as mine awakens. She does not in the least resemble my beau-ideal of a wife, but she is something better, for she is a tender, truthful, devoted woman."

"You have my best wishes for your happiness," said Julia, while a gush of irrepressible tears burst from her eyes; "since to you good has come out of evil, and my faults have led to your happiness, think of me, Charles, with kindness, as one who carries beneath the trappings of wealth a lonely but not unsympathizing heart."

"What can she mean?" thought Charles, as he left the room; can it be that she once loved me?"

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Julia, as in bitterness of spirit she entered her own chamber, where the morrow's array of bridal splendor met her view; "how little do we know of the undercurrent of life, which while we seem gayly floating in one direction, slowly bears us onward to an opposite course! Who could have believed that a careless word, an act of mere thoughtlessness, would have deprived me of lifelong happiness? Alas! there is more truth than poetry in the thought that—

'That in one moment we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, * * *
And color things to come with hues of night.' "

FORTUNE-HUNTING ; OR, THE HEIRESS.

"Her love is not the hare that I do hunt."—*As You Like It.*

"Is it possible I find you for once idle?" said Charles Errington as he entered the office of his friend Lindsay.

"You may always find me unemployed at this hour, Charles; my week's labor is finished, and I was just about to turn the key upon my musty deeds and documents. There are few things which excite me to such lightheartedness as the sunset of a Saturday afternoon, for it is always the harbinger of repose and enjoyment."

"You are a strange fellow, Lindsay," said Errington, "you work like a galley-slave all the week, and when compelled to desist from positive fatigue, you deem this mere cessation from labor—*enjoyment*. I wish I had some portion of your easy temper."

"Perhaps the sources of contentment are not open to you, Charles, as they are to me. My unremitting exertions are necessary to provide for the support of my mother and sister; and when, after severe toil, I sit down with them amid the comforts, and even luxuries of life;—when I see the cheerful fire, the plentiful table, the neatly appointed household, all of which have been purchased by my industry, I believe my enjoyment far exceeds that of the *millionaire* in the midst of all his wealth. If your father had left you no fortune, Erring-

ton, you would have learned by this time that the true secret of content is *industry*."

"Faith, then, I shall soon have a chance of being as wise on the subject as yourself, Lindsay, but I am afraid it is too late to begin the necessary discipline. Do you know that I am a ruined man?"

"Impossible!"

"Nay, it is too true: you certainly must have heard of the failure of the great mercantile house of which my father was, at the time of his death, one of the principal partners."

"Yes, but your whole fortune was surely not involved in that?"

"My father had unlimited confidence in the persons connected with him in business, and this has been my ruin. He died before any developments had been made of their imprudent if not dishonorable conduct, and as he left all his estate in their power, they have benefited themselves at my expense. An annuity of one thousand dollars is all I can now command."

"I am sorry for your loss of fortune, Errington, but really I cannot consider you poor. With a thousand dollars a year and a profession, a man may be independent. You have talents, and if I mistake not, knowledge sufficient to give you a high rank among scientific physicians."

"Faugh! the very thought of my profession disgusts me. This penetrating into the dens of disease, breathing the close and fetid atmosphere of a sick room, and exposing myself to the contact of pestilence, is not to my taste. I hate the sight of suffering, and always avoid it, if I can."

"But a good physician possesses the enviable privilege of *alleviating* suffering."

"Yes, at the expense of his convenience, his comfort, perhaps his health. He gives his time, his care, his skill; his feelings are daily harrowed up by scenes of distress, and what is his reward? why—if the patient dies, the physician is blamed; if he gets well, his first business probably is to dispute his doctor's bill. No—no—I cannot live by the practice of my profession."

"Well, if you are resolved to abandon your medical studies, your income will amply suffice for your support while you pursue some other path. Suppose you try the law."

"What! become a delver and digger into the rubbish of centuries! Waste my youth threading that interminable maze of words in which equity is hidden from vulgar eyes!—and when all is learned—when I have woven my web of wiles, then quietly ensconce myself in the midst of it and wait for victims, as a spider watches for flies. No, *that* won't answer."

"What if you should adopt a holier calling? your new figure would appear to a great advantage in the pulpit, and you are quite handsome enough to be a favorite preacher among the ladies."

"Excellent—to declaim to a multitude against the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, while my whole heart was panting after their enjoyment. Whatever I may become in later days I am not yet qualified to play *Tartuffe*."

"Nay, in my last suggestion I did but jest, Errington, for I believe there are few heavier sins than that of making the church-aisle the path to worldly advan-

tage. But what do you mean to do? Remain a bachelor and live upon your annuity?"

"That is one of the impossibilities—my income would scarcely pay my tailor's bill. There is but one resource for me,—I must *marry a fortune*."

"And thus sell *yourself* for gold—ha, Errington?"

"No, I would put in one scale my fine person, my talent, my fashionable reputation, and in the other the lady's fortune; so that one should counterbalance the others. It would be only a fair exchange."

"And what do you mean to say to your little friend, Mary Danvers?"

"For Heaven's sake, Lindsay, don't speak of that girl—I dare not allow myself to think of her. I love her to distraction, but I can no longer hope to make her my wife."

"Why not? With her domestic habits, her refined tastes, and the economical ideas which her parents' limited means have necessarily imparted, she would make an estimable wife for a poor man."

"Yes, for a man like you, Lindsay, but not for one whose extravagant habits are too deeply rooted to be destroyed by a change of circumstances. I hesitated about marrying Mary, when I thought myself rich, because *she* had no fortune, and I certainly cannot afford it now. I have not seen her since I learned my poverty."

"My dear fellow," said Lindsay warmly, "I have known the want of money so often that I am fully sensible of its value; but the wealth of a Cræsus would not tempt me to barter my affections. There is but one way to test your feelings towards an heiress; ask your-

self whether, if she were dowerless, you would love and seek to win her. If your heart replies in the affirmative, you may, with a safe conscience, make her your wife; but if you feel that her wealth is the only magnet of attraction, then act like an honorable man, and withdraw from a pursuit which can only end in sorrow. A woman is easily deceived when her feelings are interested; and the man who, under false pretences, would rob her of the treasure of her affections, is a greater villain than the thief who steals her gold."

"You are quite eloquent, Lindsay."

"Because I have witnessed some of the suffering caused by this accursed spirit of *fortune-hunting*. It is scarcely three years since I drew up a marriage settlement for a young and warm-hearted woman, who bestowed a large portion of her wealth upon her impoverished lover, and would have given all, without restriction, but for the caution of her guardian. She was not attractive in person, but she was an affectionate and loveable creature, proud of her husband, and happy in the thought that she had been enabled to bestow on him the wealth which surrounded him with luxury. He wedded her only for that wealth,—he obtained possession of all her available property, and then gave himself up to the unrestrained gratification of his vicious tastes. His cruelty drove her *mad*, and a commission of lunacy which he has taken out, enables him to control the income of that portion of her estate which is secured from his rapacity, while she pines within the walls of an asylum for the insane."

"But you cannot suppose, Lindsay, that all men are equally base."

"Do you remember the story of Hazael, who, when the prophet predicted the murder and rapine which he would afterwards commit, exclaimed, 'Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?' and yet the prediction was actually fulfilled by him to the very letter. He who can enter upon so sacred an engagement as that of marriage, with a consciousness that on his part it is only a matter of interest,—he who can sin against his better nature in thus deceiving a woman who loves and trusts him; cannot say what will be his future conduct. No man can stay the tide of evil within his heart, and he who will commit one unprincipled act, may be easily led to continue his career of crime."

"You argue well, Lindsay, and yet I cannot afford to be convinced by your reasoning. I want money—I have a thousand expensive tastes and habits which must be gratified, and I shall seriously undertake the task of courting an heiress. But I had nearly forgotten the object of my present visit. I intend setting out for the Springs next week; can't you spare a few days from your business, and take a trip with me to the summer resort of Fashion?"

"I have been thinking of indulging myself in a little extravagance, Errington; I feel the need of relaxation, and was debating whether to travel North or South, but the inducement of your society, Charles, is sufficient to decide the question."

"Thank you: I am glad to find you so accessible in this matter. We shall exchange characters for a little while; you will be the idle man and I the busy one,—you will appear as a mere spectator, and I as an actor on the stage of fashion, for I mean to commence the

practice of my new profession among the belles of Saratoga."

So saying, Errington flung away the end of his segar and sauntered out of the office.

"There goes one," said Lindsay to himself, "whom the world has spoiled; his generosity has degenerated into profuseness, his liberality has made him a spend-thrift, his wit has drawn around him a crowd of unworthy associates, and the talents which might have won for him the admiration and regard of the estimable portion of society, are wasted upon the idle frivolities of a life of fashion."

In pursuance of their plan, a few days after their conversation, the young men repaired to Saratoga, where, among the young and gay, the intellectual and the fashionable, the sensible and the frivolous, the modest and the presuming, the unaffected and the arrogant, both found ample scope for the indulgence of their individual tastes. But a few days were sufficient to satiate Lindsay with such a life of excitement, and he was already beginning to think of home, when a new arrival induced him to prolong his stay, and excited the keenest interest in the breast of his friend Errington.

The usual crowd were one day assembled on the piazza of the hotel, to speculate on the new comers as they descended from the stage, when a party alighted which was destined to interest several classes of observers. It consisted of an elderly gentleman and two ladies, one of whom was attired in a style of display but little adapted to travelling, while the other, in a simple straw bonnet and dark dress would have seemed like an attendant, had not the old gentleman been so

particular in dividing his attention equally between both. As they retired to their rooms various remarks were made respecting them, and as one or two persons present recognized the gentleman, the company were soon in possession of all the information which could be derived from slight acquaintances. It was stated that Mr. Ardley was an Englishman, of large fortune, and remarkable only for his love of claret, and his fondness for a prudent game of whist; that one of the ladies was his daughter, and the other, the daughter by a former marriage, of his second wife. Such was the story set afloat immediately after their first appearance.

The father was a jolly, good-humored man, with a very red face, very white hair, and a sly twinkle of the eye which betokened a love of the good things of this life, whether they came in the shape of substantial viands, pleasant beverages, or sparkling bon-mots. Before his daughters ventured to exhibit themselves, he had already made acquaintance with half the gentlemen in the house, for it was quite impossible to resist his "infinite humor," especially as he had a habit of thrusting his hands in his pockets immediately after uttering a jest, and jingling the "small change" with which he was always abundantly supplied, thereby giving the company auricular demonstration that his jokes were uttered by a "*man who had monies*."

If their characters might be judged according to their style of dress, there could be but little similarity of disposition in the two half-sisters. Attired in a rich embroidered satin robe, and loaded with jewelry, her emaciated figure contracted within the smallest possible compass, Miss Ardley entered the saloon with the air

of one who is conscious that nothing is wanting on her part to ensure success. But the report of her father's wealth could not blind people to the fact that her drab-colored complexion, light blue eyes almost destitute of lashes, and hair of the tint and quality of tow, afforded small claim to admiration on the score of personal attractions. Her sister, Miss Mountfort, was no beauty; a petite figure slightly inclining to *en bon point*, a face beaming with rosy health, a dark eye sparkling with intelligence, and teeth of pearly whiteness, redeemed her want of regularity of features, and made amends for a mouth *rather* too wide, and a forehead somewhat too low. A plain silk dress displayed the finely-rounded waist and well-proportioned figure; her dark hair, simply parted in front, was gathered into a full braid, in accordance with a fashion, which, though not becoming to more than one person in fifty, is admirably calculated to exhibit to advantage a small and beautifully moulded head. Devoid of any ornament, unless a small gold watch which seemed worn for use rather than display could be considered such, the simplicity of her dress soon satisfied those who were inquiring "which is the heiress?" and Anna Mountfort found herself on this, as on former occasions, only the appendage of her wealthier sister. But she seemed quite content to be left to the society of elderly ladies and married gentlemen, while the heiress was riding or walking, dancing or talking with foreign counts, whiskered dandies, moustached beaux, and other *distingués*, who usually assemble at a place like Saratoga. A temper naturally cheerful served to reconcile Miss Mountfort to the superiority of her sister in worldly advantages, and to a

careless observer she seemed almost unconscious of the comparative neglect she experienced. But the few who were sufficiently interested by her *naïve* manners, to watch her more closely, could not but notice the quiet smile which often lurked on her young lip, as she beheld the interested attentions which were lavished upon her unattractive sister.

At their first appearance both Lindsay and Errington had been attracted by the lovely countenance of Anna Mountfort. Her bright face seemed, like spring sunshine, to light up every thing it looked upon. Kindly feelings, warm affections, brilliant intellect beamed from every feature, and even her ignorance or contempt of the formal etiquette of fashionable life was an additional charm to men of taste and talent. But Errington could not afford to waste his attentions upon the dowerless beauty. It was necessary for him to make the best of his time, before the story of his impoverishment should debar him from the opportunities, which, as a man of wealth, he now enjoyed, and he accordingly devoted himself to the rich Miss Ardley, the reputed heiress of her father's large estate, with an assiduity that could scarce fail of success.

Charles Errington had all the requisites for shining in fashionable society. He was six feet high, and he employed the most skilful tailor in town ;—his hair was raven black, and, by the aid of his barber, was taught to fall in graceful curls, after a fashion which is well adapted to conceal the defects of those, who, like king Midas, are afflicted with *asses' ears* ;—his whiskers and imperial were as glossy as sultan Mahmoud's dye could make them ; and the curve of his moustache was admi-

rably calculated to display the classical form of his mouth, while it afforded the benefit of contrast to his fine teeth. Add to these personal advantages, a quick wit at understanding, and a ready tact in adapting himself to the characters of his associates, and it must be acknowledged that he was by no means deficient in the qualities most essential to success in fashionable life. It is true our hero was gifted with far higher attributes. He had talents of the noblest order—learning beyond his years—warm affections—and lofty impulses; but of what use were *these* in the career of fashion and fortune-hunting? His talents could only make him feared by the weak; his learning might be a bugbear to the ignorant; his affections were likely to interfere with his worldly prosperity; and his better feelings might, perhaps, overturn some well-arranged scheme of advancement. As a matter of policy, therefore, all such inconvenient gifts were placed out of view. Like the English duchess who pawned her diamonds, and counterfeited them in paste, in order to gratify her gambling propensities, Errington was content to barter the true glory of nature, and wear the false glitter of factitious advantages, in order to win the stake for which he was now playing.

He soon found that in the present instance his task would not be a very difficult one. Not that the lady was by any means ignorant of the snares with which she was beset, but simply because she was perfectly willing to be caught in the lure of him whom she should like best. In fact Jane Ardley was no novice in society. She had already reached that *uncertain age* when a woman is usually pretty well skilled in the knowledge

of the world, and, whatever might have been her motives for not marrying earlier in life, she certainly showed no disposition to coyness at present. Errington's reputation for wealth had first induced her to listen graciously to his blandishments, and she was not insensible to the triumph of enthralling one of the handsomest and most fashionable heroes of society. Totally destitute of intellectual graces, Miss Ardley was gifted with that species of craft and subtlety which, in the acquisition of worldly gain, often fully supplies the place of mental vigor. In the race of life, the creeping tortoise more frequently reaches the goal than the aspiring eagle, and cunning will often attain what integrity would not stoop to win. Conscious of her personal defects, mortified at the fate which had condemned her so long to a single life, and alarmed by the growing attractions of her sister, whom she had managed to keep out of view as long as possible, Miss Ardley now determined to take advantage of her position as an heiress, and rather to run the risk of wedding a fortune-hunter than to allow another season to pass, unmarried.

In the meantime Mr. Ardley looked on with as much indifference as if he had been a mere spectator of the game which was daily played before him. Uniformly kind and attentive to both his daughters, he seemed to have little affection for either, and cared no more for the swarm of adventurers who surrounded the heiress of his fortune, than for the comparative neglect which his step-daughter experienced. Mr. Ardley was one of those persons, often met with in society, the consummate selfishness of whose nature is so overlaid with agreeable social qualities that the existence of the hid-

den vice is never suspected. There is a great difference between the amiability which springs from innate good feeling, and that which is only the result of refined self-love. In the one case, it is as the abundant crop of rich grain produced from a fertile soil ;—in the other, it is only the growth of wild flowers, sown by the wind in the crevices of a flinty rock ; and yet most persons, charmed by the beauty which meets their eye, will be found to prize most those companions whose pleasant manners serve to conceal their indurated hearts. Mr. Ardley's store of anecdote, his ready wit, his imperturbable good humor, his amusing epicurism, which exhibited itself in his fondness for cooking with his own hands his favorite dishes, his droll imitations of distinguished persons whom he had met in society, and his admirable *buffa* singing, made him a great favorite with all classes of persons. So long as he could eat, drink and be merry,—so long as his bottle of claret and game of whist were not denied him, he cared not a pin for the mischances or successes, the griefs or the joys, of all the rest of mankind.

Led away by his admiration of the gentle Anna Mountfort, Lindsay had been as assiduous in his attentions to her as his friend Errington in his devotion to her sister. He found her modest, retiring manners were the fruits of a highly cultivated mind, and a heart filled with all feminine feelings ; and, in the opportunities afforded him by the comparative neglect with which she was treated, he learned that her beauty was the least of her attractions. But he was not too deeply infatuated to forget the call of duty, and leaving Errington to settle his affairs with the heiress, Lindsay

returned to his office, resolving to banish from his thoughts the lovely girl whom he was too poor to wed. He found this no easy task, however ; never before had his want of wealth seemed to him so severe a privation, and when the Ardleys took lodgings in New-York, he could not resist the temptation of becoming a frequent visitor.

In the mean time, Errington had taken care not to lose sight of the heiress. Proud of her conquest, Miss Ardley accepted, in the most public manner, of his attentions, and even seemed to take pleasure in displaying her power over him. But the time came when he dared no longer delay the decision of the matter. His money was long since exhausted, his debts had accumulated, and his creditors had only been induced to wait by the tidings of his approaching marriage. He was also alarmed by the appearance of a foreign count, who, after exciting the attention of every body, by riding daily through Broadway on horseback, attended by two grooms in liveries of blue and silver, condescended to pay court to the ladies, taking care, however, to select those who were reputed wealthy. This distinguished individual, who possessed the superior advantages of two inches additional stature, and a title, began to show symptoms of rivalry in the good graces of Miss Ardley, and Errington felt there was no time to be lost. Seizing the earliest opportunity, he breathed his protestations of love into the willing ear of the lady, and was overjoyed to find that he was not doomed to sigh in vain. But, knowing that an application to her father would necessarily involve the discovery of his straitened circumstances, he endeavored, without

alarming the lady's suspicions, to offer satisfactory reasons for keeping their engagement secret from her family. Miss Ardley entered fully into his plans, and assured him that it would be impossible to obtain her father's consent to their union, alleging, that by the will of her mother, from whom the fortune had descended, the property was to become hers, immediately upon her marriage, and that it was consequently the interest of her father to defer such an event as long as possible. These tidings were artfully designed to incite Errington to greater ardor than he had yet shown, and their effects were quite equal to her expectations. He immediately proposed an elopement, and with less hesitation than he had expected or even wished, she consented to a clandestine marriage.

It was with strange, sad feelings that Errington pondered on his future destiny, when he returned home on that eventful evening. He had gone too far to retrace his steps, and, therefore, reflection could do him no good; yet he indulged it till his brain reeled on the very verge of madness. He felt that he had pledged himself to wed a woman of unattractive person, of vulgar manners, of uncultivated mind, and, as he doubted not, of harsh temper,—a woman, in short, whom he should blush to introduce as his wife. He was conscious that he had sacrificed his happiness, and he could not but ask himself whether gold was worth the price he was about to pay for it. He was half tempted to break off the alliance, but his eye fell upon a bundle of unpaid bills and he knew not how to resist so powerful an argument.

During these proceedings, Lindsay had allowed his

affections to become too deeply interested in the orphan sister, and he now bitterly reproached himself for his folly in thus exposing himself to the fascinations of her society. He felt that he had acted unwisely, but he determined to make amends for his error by an instant and total withdrawal of his attentions. He accordingly left home one evening, with a resolution to make it his farewell visit to Miss Mountfort, since his poverty forbade him to offer her his hand. But, alas, for the weakness of lovers' vows! He found Miss Mountfort alone, and, unfortunately for his good resolutions, the conversation assumed a tone of sentiment, which proved fatal to his prudential calculations, as well as to his sense of honor. Scarcely conscious of the full meaning of the words he uttered, he avowed his love to the gentle girl, and, with a mingled feeling of rapture and self-reproach, learned that his affection was not unrequited. But when the tumult of his thoughts had somewhat subsided, he remembered that duty required him to make a frank statement of his circumstances, lest he should involve Miss Mountfort in an engagement of which she might afterwards repent.

"I have erred—deeply erred, dear Miss Mountfort," said he, "in thus yielding to the impulses of my heart; I can only offer you a humble home, and a narrow fortune. My utmost exertions can but insure me an income of fifteen hundred dollars, and my mother and sister have a claim upon me, which cannot be disallowed. Can you consent to share the simple comforts of that abode, which is brightened by the sunshine of affection, but destitute of all the appliances of luxury?"

"Cannot a wife be content with the lot which suffices for a mother, Lindsay?" said Miss Mountfort; "but perhaps," continued she, while the flush of wounded pride crossed her fair face, "perhaps you think I shall be a burden to you;—prudence may require that you should wed a woman of fortune, rather than a dowerless orphan."

"Anna,—Miss Mountfort, this is unkind: it is but for your own sake, I hesitate. God knows how cheerfully *I* could encounter poverty and privation for you, but you are accustomed to the rich appointments of a wealthy household, and how can you endure the change?"

"You forget, Lindsay, that I enjoy these luxuries only upon sufferance," said Miss Mountfort, with an arch look; "you forget, that though living in the midst of splendor, I am absolutely poor."

"No, Anna, had I not known you to be destitute of fortune, I would have suffered in silence the pangs of hopeless affection, but would never have made known to you my feelings. Yet, heretofore, your father's kindness has secured you from all the inconveniences of a narrow income, and as the wife of a poor man, there will be necessity for economy and restraint, of which you little dream."

"I shall not shrink from my duties, Lindsay; can you not trust me even as I trust you?" and as she spoke she laid her hand on his.

"Trust you? yes—with my whole heart," exclaimed Lindsay, passionately, as he pressed that little hand to his lips.

Just at this moment Mr. Ardley entered the room,

with a most whimsical expression of face, and holding an open letter. At the sight of Lindsay he paused, and read aloud the following words :

MY DEAR FATHER—

Circumstances which you doubtless understand, have induced me to take a step, which you will, I trust, excuse, since in uniting myself to a man of fortune, and good standing in society, I have only followed your repeated advice. I was married this morning, and, after to-morrow, we shall be at the Astor House, where we shall be happy to receive the congratulations of our friends.

Your affectionate daughter,

JANE ERRINGTON.

Lindsay and Miss Mountfort listened in mute amazement to this singular epistle, and awaited the explosion of parental wrath, which they expected would follow. But, Mr. Ardley was too fond of his ease to get in a passion about trifles.

"Pray, sir," said he to Lindsay, "were you privy to this plan?"

"I give you my word, Mr. Ardley, that it was never hinted to me."

"What is the fortune of your friend Errington?" asked the anxious father.

Lindsay hesitated, until the question was repeated, when he replied, "I believe his income is about a thousand dollars a year."

"A thousand dollars! not more than a thousand dollars! why I thought he was almost a *millionaire*," exclaimed Mr. Ardley.

"He was once very wealthy, but the failure of the house of Errington & Co., in New Orleans, has ruined

him ; an annuity, which he draws from his mother, is all he now possesses."

"Then Jane has made a pretty business out of her well-managed elopement. She would not ask my consent for fear I would tell the whole truth, and I suppose Mr. Errington was equally afraid of inconvenient developments. Well,—if this isn't diamond cut diamond!—Upon my soul it is a capital joke," and the father, throwing himself on the sofa, indulged in a hearty fit of laughter.

Lindsay looked at him with astonishment, and could only attribute his conduct to the influence of his favorite claret, but the arch smile which sat on the lip of Anna Mountfort, was more mysterious to him than the obstreperous mirth of her father. He waited in vain, however, for an explanation of the jest, for Anna whispered something in her father's ear, which served to restore him to his usual caution, and Lindsay was at a loss to understand what could make a daughter's elopement so good a joke.

A few weeks after the events just recorded, a small select bridal party were assembled in St. Paul's Church. The chief actors in the scene were our friends Lindsay and Miss Mountfort, while the most distinguished persons in their train were Mr. and Mrs. Errington, whose elopement had so recently formed the "*nine day wonder*" of the fashionable world. Mr. Ardley, who gave away the bride, seemed in high spirits, and full of ill-repressed mirth as he whispered in the ear of each coachman on leaving the church. The bridegroom was too much occupied with his own thoughts to notice that the carriages were proceeding in a direction different

from that which they had pursued on their way to the church. But in a few moments they turned into one of the most splendid streets in the upper part of the city,—the steps were let down, and marshalled by Mr. Ardley, the company entered a stately house, furnished in the most superb manner. Lindsay stared in silent wonder, and had just come to the conclusion that his father-in-law was about to make the bride a very magnificent present—but one which little suited the fortune of the bridegroom, when Mr. Ardley led him aside, and beckoning to Errington to follow them, thus addressed them :

“ Business before pleasure, gentlemen ; let us settle one affair first, and we can eat our sumptuous repast with a better relish. My wife was very wealthy, and fearing the effect which so great a fortune might have upon her daughter’s character, she made a will, by which she bequeathed to me the use of all the income, provided I kept the child in ignorance of her prospects until her twentieth year. This condition was easily fulfilled, and just twelve months ago she learned that she was an heiress. But her romantic temper led her to wish the secret still kept, in order to test the sincerity of her suitors, and as I was thus enabled to retain the income another year, you may be sure I made no objection. But she is of age to-day, and I must, hereafter, be content with a bare two thousand a year, which is mine by the bequest of her mother.”

“ Of whom do you speak ?” exclaimed Errington, as Lindsay was about to ask the same question, “ Jane is surely more than twenty-one.”

“ Indeed she is, my good sir ; your wife will never see

thirty-one again, Mr. Errington, but I am speaking of Anna Mountfort, my step-daughter, the heiress of the large fortune, which fate so kindly bestowed on me. Mr. Lindsay, Anna positively forbade me to tell you the whole truth at an earlier period, but I may now congratulate you upon obtaining with the hand of your lovely bride, an estate worth fifteen thousand a year."

"And Jane?" gasped Errington.

"Is entitled to an annuity of five hundred, during her life, which will be doubled at my death. Had you asked me for the hand of my daughter, I should have felt myself bound, by the honor of a gentleman, to tell you the truth respecting her prospects, but you chose to marry without inquiring '*which is the heiress,*' and must now reap the benefits of your own folly. Mr. Lindsay, any future inquiries you may wish to make shall be promptly answered, and all the necessary documents shall be put into your hands to-morrow, but you will be so good as to excuse me at present,—dinner will be ready to be served, as soon as I shall have cooked the delicious *canvass backs* which are now awaiting my attention."

FAITH TEMPLETON.

These are they
Of whom fame speaks not with her clarion voice.

MRS. HEWANS.

FAITH TEMPLETON was no heroine of romance; she was only the gentle daughter of an humble village pastor, whose whole life had been spent in doing good, and in making others happy. More fortunate than most of his profession, Mr. Templeton possessed a small estate, which enabled him to provide more liberally than his narrow income would otherwise have allowed, for his widowed sister and her only son, who resided with him; and in this little household of love did Faith grow up to womanhood, without one thought beyond her narrow range of humble duties. Her mother had died while she was yet too young to feel her loss, and her aunt had supplied to her the place of a parent, while her cousin, who was several years her senior, had been the companion of her early years. She had been a quiet but happy child, and she grew up a gentle, serene, cloudless-tempered woman, with a face ever beaming the sunshine of a cheerful heart. No one ever thought of calling her pretty, yet her graceful figure, her clear healthful complexion, and the freshness of her joyous countenance, gave her just claims to the possession of that attribute which is better than beauty; for as bless-

edness is far higher than *happiness*, so is *loveliness* a richer gift than *beauty*. Faith Templeton, then, was a lovely girl, and so thought her cousin Allan. He had been her playmate in infancy, her companion in childhood, and her guide in youth, and the sweet habitude of loving had grown up in the hearts of both.

But Allan Graham possessed a gift as dangerous as it is brilliant. He was a youth of decided talent, with much, too, of that versatility and waywardness which is often attendant upon genius. In every thing that pertained to the imagination, Allan far excelled all his competitors, but in the acquisition or demonstration of practical truths, the veriest dullard could surpass him, if he happened to be in one of his eccentric moods. His beautiful poetic fancy was not balanced by sober judgment, and the qualities which would have made him a worthy denizen of "Arcady the Blest," disqualified him for acting a consistent part in real life. But there was so much kindness in his nature, so much tenderness in his feelings, that his errors were regarded indulgently by those who knew him best, and no one would have ventured to surmise that there might be much refined selfishness in a character which seemed so full of good impulses.

Mr. Templeton, who loved Allan as his own son, had destined him to be his successor in the ministry; and the two dearest wishes of the good old man's heart were to see Allan filling the pulpit which he now occupied, and to welcome him as the husband of his daughter. A part only of his wishes did the aged pastor realize. Allan had nearly completed his collegiate course of studies, and the cousins had plighted their troth to

each other, when Mr. Templeton died very suddenly, leaving no will, and of course no provision for his sister and her son. But Faith knew well her father's wishes, and she knew that he designed by her future marriage to secure the permanent comfort of all. She had therefore no doubt as to the course she ought to pursue. After the first anguish of her grief had passed away, she ventured to consult her cousin on the subject, and found, to her great relief, that Allan's delicacy was not by any means morbidly sensitive. He seemed to take it for granted that matters would go on as usual, and returned to college with as little concern respecting his future prospects as he had all his life evinced. This, which was, in fact, the result of mere selfishness, seemed to Faith like a noble trustfulness of character. She loved her cousin dearly, and to her gentle nature he seemed a model of manly excellence.

It was not until Allan was prepared to enter upon his sacred studies that Faith began to suspect a change in his views of life. Instead of applying himself earnestly to the new duties which now awaited him, he became moody, melancholy, and inert; passing his time in listless idleness, or wasting it in some frivolous amusement. Something seemed to weigh heavily upon his mind, and to oppress his usually joyous spirits. The anxious tenderness of Faith soon unraveled the mystery. Allan's restless mind had led him to try many and various pursuits, but all had failed him. He could not discover the true bent of his genius, and his versatility, which seemed almost like frivolity, was but the struggle of a soul seeking its true vocation. Accident at length revealed to him what he had so long sought in vain. A

visit to the studio of a sculptor enlightened him, and the youth who had tried painting and poetry and science without success, discovered that he possessed an eye which could behold the graceful statue in the shapeless marble, and a hand which could work out his own beautiful conceptions.

Yet this knowledge of his own powers came to him fraught with sorrow, for he well knew how almost insurmountable were the obstacles which intervened between his hopes and their fulfillment. He remembered the desires of his late benefactor ; he thought of the faith he had plighted to his gentle cousin, and a myriad of ties seemed to bind him to the life he had already entered upon. But Allan was not one who could silence the voice of an imperative desire within his own heart. He became moody, melancholy, almost misanthropic in his habits, and, at length, ventured to confide in Faith the true nature of his unhappiness. The gentle girl listened to the tale with more pain than she would willingly have disclosed to him. She had none of his enthusiasm, and when he dwelt upon his aspiring hopes of fame, she could only listen in silence. But when he spoke so eagerly of quitting his native land, and seemed to found all his anticipations upon a long residence in Rome, as the primary step towards his future honors, it needed all a woman's power of repression to keep down the swelling anguish of a loving and sorrowing heart.

Yet Faith knew not what it was to yield to selfish impulses. From the moment when she became acquainted with Allan's wishes she had determined that they should be gratified, but she had been so much ac-

customed to take plain and practical views of life, that she clearly saw all the difficulties which were to be overcome. She was entirely ignorant of the probable expenses of a prolonged residence in Europe, and Allan had very exaggerated ideas on the subject, so that she was convinced a much larger sum of money than she could command would be required. She was resolute and persevering, however, and she therefore consulted with a neighbor, a man of business habits and cold temper, who would merely give her the desired advice without troubling her with disinterested counsel. The result of it all was, that Faith mortgaged her little patrimony, and the amount thus obtained was placed in the hands of a banker, to be drawn upon as Allan's necessities might require. This was done without the knowledge of her cousin, for she anticipated his generous opposition to the sacrifice, and she was too firm in her purpose to subject herself willingly to his remonstrances. But Faith did not know Allan's true character. His joy at the prospect of now accomplishing his desires—his wild excitement at the idea of visiting the old world, and exploring its treasures of art, made him totally forgetful of the means by which he had compassed his wishes. He thanked his cousin warmly and heartily, but he was quite unmindful of the sacrifice she had made and must continue to make. His hurried preparations were soon completed, and without one misgiving of conscience on account of her to whom he was leaving the bitter legacy of hope deferred, he set out upon his pilgrimage.

Month after month passed away. Allan's letters were full of hope and happiness, for he was wandering

in a land redolent of loveliness, and he was drinking deeply of the joy which is poured out in such excess upon one who, for the first time, finds himself in a clime where simple breath is enjoyment. He was fostering his genius under the genial skies of a country where life is poetry, and he had little thought to waste upon those he had left in his distant home. Yet the time which had fled so pleasantly to him, had brought care and sorrow to Faith Templeton. She was surrounded by anxieties, for the weight of debt, that hardest of all things to a woman's conscience, was upon her, and she seemed to become more deeply involved by every struggle to free herself. Three years after Allan's departure, during a season of general pecuniary distress, she found her means quite exhausted, and a sale of the homestead where she had been born and bred became absolutely necessary. A small sum remained after the incumbrance on the estate was removed, and Faith soon perceived that she must depend on her own exertions for her future livelihood. Accordingly she opened a school for the better class of village children, and, as every one was willing to aid the "minister's daughter" in her attempts at eking out her narrow income, Faith soon found that with economy and industry she could secure her aunt as well as herself from the pressure of want.

How different was her patient and toilsome life from the luxurious existence which Allan now led, in a land where the sweet delight of idleness makes up the sum of human enjoyment. Yet he knew nothing of the privations Faith was suffering for his sake. He asked no questions; and content with a vague belief

that all was right, because he heard nothing to the contrary, he continued to draw from time to time, in small sums, the money which still lay in the banker's hands, occasionally satisfying his conscience by selling a few pencil-sketches, or clay-models, as a slight aid to his own support.

Was there not magnanimity, genuine, unmistakable magnanimity in Faith's conduct? Had she been but ordinarily selfish, Allan would have been probably pursuing his studies at home, in the near prospect of fulfilling all her father's hopes, and she would still have possessed her little patrimony, and been happy in the society of her lover. It is easy to play a grand part in great things, but it requires a very noble soul to be great in the small duties of life, and few, very few women, could have acted the part of the self-sacrificing, the self-forgetting Faith Templeton. Yet her affections were such habitudes of her being, and their gratification was so essential to her happiness, that her sacrifices were unnoted by herself. In a heart like hers, tenderness is a plant of slow growth, but it takes deep root, and when love has grown up in such a nature from childhood, it can only be destroyed by the slow decay of time and death.

Four, five, six, *seven* years passed on, and yet Allan spoke not of return. His letters had become changed in tone. They were less frequent, shorter, and contained less tidings of himself. Though he had for some time provided for his daily wants by his own industry and skill in modelling copies from the antique, yet he seemed now less hopeful of success. He seemed to have grown weary and morbid, yet he said nothing of

the associations of his boyhood. He wrote to his cousin kindly and tenderly, but with a degree of reserve which troubled her gentle spirit. At length the whole tale was told: Faith received a long letter from him; the handwriting was tremulous, and in some places it was blotted and blurred as if tears had fallen upon the page.

"You will hate me, Faith," he wrote; "you will hate me, and I deserve that you should; yet I swear to you that I did not mean to wrong you. I loved you dearly when we parted, and I fancied that my heart swelled with the full tide of passion when I bade you farewell. Alas! had I never left you I should still be happy in such belief. When I found myself first in strange lands, a feeling of loneliness took possession of me; and then a sense of beauty, dazzling, intoxicating, bewildering, came upon me. The enervating influence of the genial clime, the presence of beauty in earth, and sea, and sky, the personification of beauty on the speaking canvas and in the breathing marble, all combined to make me conscious of a new sense, a new capacity for enjoyment. I did not cease to love you, Faith, but I felt myself capable of a deeper and stronger feeling. You were my sister, my friend, my gentle, sweet companion, and as such your memory was fondly cherished; but my blood coursed like molten lava in my veins, and my brain thrilled with wild fancies when the presence of the beautiful entranced me. I began to image to myself the true form of Love. Shall I confess to you, Faith? *It took not the semblance of my boyish fancy.*

"Yet I resolved to renounce all these maddening fantasies; I resolved to devote myself to the acquisi-

tion of fame, and when I had won for myself the hope of a name, I meant to return to you and make you my honored and cherished wife. I resolved to crush these new impulses, which were as vipers to my heart. I would be a man of honor even if the sacrifice of my deeper nature were demanded. But you seemed so content in your absence from me, you were so resigned, so quiet, so almost cold in your patient sufferance of our long protracted separation, that I could not believe you were unhappy. So I lingered on, amid those sweet excitements of soul and sense, until the magic of their influence had perverted my very soul.

"I dared not write to you the truth; I dared not tell you that my being was consumed by a wild and fierce and untamable passion. I dared not tell you that she for whom I would have periled life and honor was the wife of another—the wife of one who scorned and ill-treated her. Yes, in all her bright and glorious beauty, she was flung off like a worthless thing, because the man who claimed the right to dispose of her destiny was given up to groveling vice. I forgot you, Faith; I forgot all that bound me to my native land. A tress of Teresa's raven hair could bind me with a stronger band than honor and loyalty. For the first time in my life, I loved madly and passionately. Oh! how different was the wild, fierce joy of such a feeling from the calm, still, pulseless tenderness of my early affection.

"But I looked not to any happy future. Teresa was already a wife, and only dark hopelessness could rest on such a love. Yet I told her how I loved her—I

taught her to seek my sympathy—and she first wondered at such burning passion in one who came of so cold a clime—she wondered at it, and then was won by it. But I must not linger thus in my tale. Teresa's husband died ; a tavern brawl sent him to his last account, and left her free. He had wasted his wealth in riotous excess, and she was now friendless and poor. She claimed from me the sympathy I had so often proffered, and I gazed on her glorious beauty until I had no remembrance of aught beyond my present joy. I listened to her voice of music until the accents of duty were unheard.

“Teresa is my wife, my wedded wife, Faith, and I have treated you like a villain.

“It is more than a twelvemonth since I married ; and want and sorrow have made fearful havoc with me. I am coming to you, Faith, with my wife and my child : they must not starve when I am no longer here to watch over them. As for me, my gentle cousin, I am dying ; my days are numbered ; the hollow cough that racks my feeble frame, the fevered pulse which now keeps rapid time for the march of death, are tokens not to be mistaken. It may be that I shall live to reach my boyhood's home, but it will only be to lay my bones in the old church-yard. In three days more I shall embark for my native land. I know not how to ask you, Faith, and yet I would fain have you meet me in New-York. I would hear from your own lips that you forgive me, and I would commend to your care my helpless Teresa. She loves me with an affection which your calm nature could not fathom, and I dread for her, more than for myself, the moment when death

will sever us. Meet me, my sweet Faith, and let me place in your safe-keeping my heart's treasures ere I go hence to be seen no more."

To describe the feelings of Faith Templeton as she perused this terrible letter would be worse than useless. The current of her feelings had been so quiet that she knew not their depth, until now when they were so fearfully stirred. She had never before suspected her own capacity for suffering; but the wild and tumultuous emotions which now struggled within her bosom, taught her how strong is the human heart in its agony. Oh! who that has ever known this terrific upheaving of the tranquil waves of feeling, but remembers with what cold horror they watched the receding waters! Hope, and Love, and Truth, even faith in Providence, and trust in God, are sometimes whelmed beneath the mighty tide; and from the wrecks of our richly freighted bark, we can only build an altar to "Time the Comforter."

Hours of tearful, prayerful anguish did Faith endure ere she could summon her wonted energy to her aid. Her heart was crushed, and yet her magnanimous soul did not cease to utter the oracles of truth. The path of duty seemed plain to her; and she resolved to tread it firmly and patiently. To meet Allan with a kindly welcome—to receive his wife as a sister, and his child as a new claimant on her affection—to revive his drooping spirits, and, as she hoped, to renew his failing health by her care—such were the thoughts of the heart-stricken but noble woman.

Deputing the charge of her little school to a friend, until her return, she set off for the city, accompanied

by Allan's aged mother. On the day she reached New-York the ship was reported as arrived, and, with mingled emotions, Faith prepared to meet her cousin. She had pictured him pale, feeble, and suffering, and she had schooled herself to perfect calmness at their meeting that she might spare his feelings. Alas! she was soon freed from all such tender anxieties. On the evening before the ship reached port, Allan had breathed his last. To look upon his lifeless body, and to listen to the piteous wailings of his desolate widow, were now all that Faith could do. Poor Faith! it was a bitter trial. She had hoped to minister to his comfort, to make his last days happy by her friendship, to assure him of her forgiveness, and to receive from his hands the trust of those whom he loved. But now death had destroyed "the last pale hope that shivered at her heart." She could not breathe pardon and affection in his leaden ear, she could not press with kindly greeting his icy fingers. She was destined to offer sacrifices without reward, without appreciation, and henceforth she must cherish life for the sake of those who wept his death. Poor, poor Faith!

Allan's widow was young and very beautiful, but she was as childlike in character as her own fair babe, whom she fondled like a plaything in the midst of all her grief. She could not speak a word of English, and the accents of her soft Italian tongue were musical but meaningless in the ears of Faith. Yet a sympathy of feeling seemed to unite the mourners, and Teresa was gentle and docile in her sorrow. The body of Allan Graham was borne to his native village, and

laid in the old church-yard where he had often played when a boy; while Teresa and the child became the inmates of Faith's humble home. Ceaselessly now was the lonely-hearted woman called to toil, for those who had been dearest to Allan depended upon her daily labor for their every comfort. Yet there was much kindly sympathy awakened in those who had long known and loved her, and Faith soon found, that while her health and strength remained, want would never come nigh them.

Many and great were now her trials. Allan's mother had long been failing, and this unlooked for sorrow had hastened the work of time. She became infirm in body and imbecile in mind, a burden upon Faith's hands as well as upon her heart. Teresa, too, with her childish ways, her ignorance of the restraints of northern life, her waywardness of temper, her reckless gayety at one time, her frightful moodiness at another, and her fierce, ungovernable anger at the slightest opposition to her will, filled Faith with anxious cares, and left her little enjoyment of that peace which was the true atmosphere of her soul. Yet was she ever meek and patient, for she looked upon all her trials as so many offerings to the memory of Allan. She bore her aunt's infirmities and caprices with gentleness, and though she had more to dread from Teresa's untamed character, yet she despaired not of winning her to better impulses by the influence of kindness. She taught her the language of her adopted land, and strove unweariedly to instruct her in the duties so essential to womanly character in a country where happiness grows not up without careful culture.

Allan's child, too, the little Angelo, as his mother fondly called him, became an object of especial interest to Faith, for as he grew older she saw much of his father's vacillating temper and of his mother's wild nature in the beautiful boy. Around her was care and life-long anxiety, and yet the sweet, trusting character of Faith led her to fashion ever some gentle hope for the future, and now all that remained to her of anticipation was associated with the boy, the child of her affection.

Years passed on, and the lines which time and sorrow write on every brow, were traced deeply on the forehead of Faith. Silver threads wove themselves thickly amid her brown locks, and she knew that, in weariness and toil, she was now treading the downhill of life. But never yet was human suffering utterly in vain. Dark and gloomy as seem the paths of sorrow, yet do they ever lead to light and goodness. Mrs. Graham, after years of helplessness, died with a blessing on her lips, and Faith felt that so far her cares had been repaid. But it was not until long, long afterward that the wild temper of Teresa was subdued beneath her gentle influence. Many a weary season of discomfort and dissension and dissatisfaction did Faith undergo—many were the trials of her patience with the wayward and undisciplined creature who had come in between herself and happiness. Yet never did Faith indulge in one word of unkindness or rebuke toward her whom Allan had loved. At length Teresa, too, was gathered to the shadowy regions of the dead; but in her life's last hours Faith's pure heart swelled with grateful joy when she found that her efforts had

not been in vain, and that a prayerful reliance upon Heaven had taken the place of Teresa's proud defiance.

A quarter of a century rolled away—what an age in the heart's record!—and Faith, now an aged and decrepit woman, lay stretched upon the bed of death. One only hope had not deceived her: Allan's child had realized her fondest anticipations—in him had her prayers been answered, and now his every tone and look spoke the faithful minister of gospel truth, as he sat beside the dying and read the precious promises of Holy Writ. Faith Templeton had been to him as a second mother—she had nurtured his childhood in piety, she had directed his steps in the paths of wisdom, and she had been suffered to behold him filling the humble but useful station which had been her father's pride. Now her duties had been all fulfilled—her mission was accomplished, and the gray ghastliness of death was fast settling upon her face. Suddenly a light, as if an angel wing had swept across her pillow, illumined her countenance.

"All is clear, now," she murmured; "the trials of a long and weary life—the heavy darkness which sometimes involved my soul—the long-suffering of my patient heart—all is now made clear to me. The mysteries of life are revealed to the dying eye, and now all is bright. Through much sorrow are we purified—through suffering alone are we perfected for Heaven."

And with these hopeful and trusting words her gentle spirit passed away.

THE MISTAKEN CHOICE ;

OR, THREE YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE.

"So you are really going to be married, Edward?"

"Yes, uncle ; and I hope you will agree with me in thinking that I have made a very prudent choice."

"That remains to be seen yet," said Mr. Waterton.
"In the first place, who is the lady?"

"Miss Laura Tarleton."

"I know her *name* well enough, for you have scarcely uttered any other one these six weeks," was the crusty reply ; "but I want to know something of her family."

"Her father was a southern merchant, and died four or five years since, leaving only two daughters to inherit his large estate ; one of these daughters married about two years since, and is now in Europe ; the other I hope to introduce to your affections as my wife."

"Has she no mother?"

"Her mother died while she was yet very young."

"Where was she educated?"

"At the fashionable boarding-school of Madame Finesse, and I can assure you no expense has been spared in her education."

"I dare say not : these new-fangled establishments

for the manufacture of man-traps, don't usually spare expense. How old is your intended wife?"

"Just nineteen."

"Where has she lived since she left school, for I suppose she was '*finished*,' as they style it, some years since?"

"She has resided lately at the Astor House, under the protection of a relative who boards there."

"Then she cannot know much about housekeeping."

"I dare say not," replied Edward, with a slight feeling of vexation, "but all that knowledge comes by practice, uncle."

"If her time has been divided between a boarding-school and a hotel, where is she to learn any thing about it?"

"Oh, women seem to have an intuitive knowledge of such things."

"You are mistaken, boy," said the old man; "if a girl has been brought up in a good home, and sees a regular system of housekeeping constantly pursued, she will become unconsciously familiar with its details, even though she may not then put such knowledge in practice; the consequence will be, that when she is the mistress of a house, her memory will assist her judgment—a quality, by the way, not too common in girls of nineteen. But how is a poor thing who has seen nothing but the *skimble-skamble* of a school-household or the clockwork regularity of a great hotel, to know any thing of the machinery by which the comfort of a home is obtained and secured?"

"Oh I am not afraid to trust to Laura," replied

Edward with animation, "she is young, good-tempered, and, I believe, loves me ; so I have every security for the future. When there's a will there's always a way."

"True, true, Charles, and I only hope your wife may have the will to find the right way ; what is her fortune?"

"Reports vary respecting the amount—some say eighty, others one hundred thousand dollars."

"Don't *you know* any thing about it?"

"I know that her fortune is very considerable, especially for a poor devil like me, who can barely clear two thousand a year by business," answered Edward, with some irritation.

"When your father married, he was master of only three hundred dollars in the world."

"That may be, and the consequence was that my father's son has been obliged to work like a dog all his life."

"The very best thing that could have happened to you, my dear boy."

"How do you make that out? For my part, I see nothing very desirable in poverty."

"Nor do I ; poverty is certainly an evil, but it is an evil to which you have never been exposed ; competence was the reward of your father's industry, and he was thus enabled to bestow a good education and good habits upon his son. The limited range of your own experience will convince you of the danger of great riches. Who are the persons in our great city most notorious for vice and folly? Who are the horse-jockies, the gamblers, the rowdies, and the fools of high

life? Why, they are the sons of our rich men, and how can we expect better things from those who from their very childhood are pampered in idleness and luxury? I know you will tell me there are exceptions to this sweeping censure, and this I am willing to allow, for there are some minds which even the influence of wealth cannot injure; but how few are they, compared with the number of those who are ruined in their very infancy by the possession of riches! Depend upon it, Ned, that learning, industry, and virtue, form the best inheritance which any man can derive from his ancestors."

"It is a pity the world would not think so, uncle."

"So it is, boy; but the fact is such as I have stated, whatever the majority of people may think. You have not now to learn that the wise and good are always in the *minority* in this world. But tell me one thing, my dear boy; if Miss Tarleton were poor and friendless, instead of being rich and fashionable, would you have fallen in love with her?"

"Why yes—certainly—I don't know—," stammered Edward, confusedly, "but that is supposing so improbable a case that I cannot determine."

"Suppose she were suddenly to be deprived of her fortune," said the persevering old man, "would you still be so desirous of wedding her?"

"Why, to tell you the honest truth, uncle, I do not think I should, and for an excellent reason. Laura has been brought up as a rich man's daughter, and therefore can scarcely be expected to have had proper training for a poor man's wife. If I were compelled to support a family on my paltry business, it would be neces-

sary to have a more prudent and economical companion than Laura is likely to prove ; but, thank Heaven, that is not the case."

"All are liable to reverses of fortune, and should such befall you in future, you might chance to find that a prudent wife without money is a better companion in misfortune than an extravagant one who brought a rich dowry."

"My dear uncle, do not imagine all kinds of unpleasant contingencies ; the idea of what you call a *prudent woman* is shocking to my notions of feminine character ; it always conjures up in my mind an image of a sharp-voiced, keen-eyed creature, scolding at servants, fretting at children, and clattering slip-shod about the house to look after candle-ends and cheese-parings. Before a woman can become parsimonious she must in a measure unsex herself, since the foible most natural to the sex is extravagance—the excess of a liberal spirit."

"You are mistaken, Edward ; that there are such women as you describe, bustling, notable housewives, who pride themselves on their ability to *manage*, as they term it, and who practice cunning because unable to use force, I acknowledge ; but they are chiefly to be found among those who have been placed in an unnatural position in society,—women, who having neither father, brother, nor husband to protect them, have been obliged to struggle with the world, and have learned to *jostle* lest they should *be jostled* in the race of life. But bachelor as I am, I have had many opportunities of studying the sex, and I can assure you that economy, frugality and industry, are by no means incompatible

with feminine delicacy, refinement of thought, and elegant accomplishments."

"Well, it may be all true, uncle," replied Edward, utterly wearied of the old man's lecture, "but it is too late to reflect upon the matter now, even if I were so disposed. I am to be married next week, and I hope when you see Laura you will think with me, and give me credit for more prudence than you seem to believe I possess."

Edward Waterton possessed good feelings, and, as he believed, good principles; yet, seduced by the ambition of equalling his richer neighbors, he had persuaded himself into choosing a wife, less from affection than from motives of interest. Had Laura Tarleton been poor, he certainly would never have thought of her, since, pretty as she was, she lacked the brilliancy of character which he had always admired. But there was a sin upon his conscience, known only to himself and *one* other, which often clouded his brow, even in the midst of his anticipated triumph. There was a young, fair, and gifted girl, whom he had loved with all the fervor of sincere attachment, and *he knew* that she loved him, although no word on the subject had been uttered by either. He knew that his looks, and tones, and actions had been to her those of a lover, and he had little reason to doubt the feeling with which he had been met. He had looked forward to the time when he should be quietly settled amid the comforts of a peaceful home, and the image of *that fair girl* was always the prominent object in his pictures for the future. But a change came over the spirit of the whole nation. Wealth poured into the country—or at least what was then

considered wealth—and with it came luxury and sloth. The golden stream came to *some* like a mountain torrent, and others began to repine at receiving it only as the tiny rivulet. People “made haste to be rich,” and young Waterton was infected with the same thirst after wealth. He met with Laura Tarleton, learned that she was an orphan heiress, and instantly determined to secure the glittering prize. Ambition conquered the tenderness of his nature; he forsook the lady of his love, and after an acquaintance of six weeks succeeded in becoming the husband of the wealthy votary of fashion.

Not long after his marriage, he discovered one *slight* error in his calculations, and found that his wife’s hundred thousand dollars had in reality dwindled down to thirty thousand. But even this was not to be despised, and, conscious that he had nothing but talents and industry when he commenced life, he felt that he had drawn a prize in the lottery. Grateful to his wife for her preference of him, and conscious that he had not bestowed on her his full affection, he determined to make all the amends in his power, by lavishing every kindness upon her, and submitting implicitly to her wishes. Having intimated to him that she should prefer boarding during the first year of their married life, he accordingly engaged a suite of apartments at the Astor House, where they lived in a style of splendor and ease exceedingly agreeable to the taste of both. Mrs. Waterton was extremely pretty, with an innocent, child-like face, and a graceful figure, and her husband felt so much pride in the admiration which she received in society, that he forgot to notice her mental deficiency.

Their time was passed in a perpetual round of excitement and gayety. During the hours when the counting-room claimed the husband's attention, the young wife lounged on a sofa, read the last new novel, dawdled through a morning's shopping, or paid fashionable visits. The afternoon was spent over the dinner table, while the evening soon passed in the midst of a brilliant party, or amid the pleasures of some public amusement. But living thus in the bustle of a hotel, with a large circle of acquaintances always ready to drink Mr. Waterton's wine and flirt with his pretty wife, they were rarely left to each other's society, and at the termination of the first twelvemonth they knew little more of each other's tempers and feelings than when they pledged their vows at the altar. Edward had learned that his placid Laura was somewhat pertinacious and very fond of dress, while she had been deeply mortified by the discovery that Edward's deceased mother had, during her widowhood, kept a thread and needle store; but this was all that they had ascertained of each other. There had been no studying of each other's character—no opportunity of practising that *adaptation* so necessary to the comfort of married life. They had lived only in a crowd, and were as yet in the position of partners in a quadrille, associated rather for a season of gayety than for the changeful scenes of actual life.

The commencement of the second year found the young couple busily engaged in preparing for house-keeping. A stately house, newly built and situated in a fashionable part of the city, was selected by Mrs. Waterton, and purchased by her obsequious husband in obedience to her wishes, though he did not think it

necessary to inform her that *two-thirds* of the purchase money was to remain on mortgage. They now only awaited the arrival of the rich furniture which Mrs. Waterton had directed her sister to select in Paris. This came at length, and with all the glee of a child she beheld her house fitted with carpets of such turf-like softness that the foot was almost buried in their bright flowers; mirrors that might have served for walls to the palace of truth; couches, divans, and fauteuils, inlaid with gold and covered with velvet most exquisitely painted; curtains, whose costly texture had been quadrupled in value by the skill of the embroideress; tables of the finest mosaic; lustres and girandoles of every variety, glittering with their wealth of gold and crystal; and all the thousand expensive toys which serve to minister to the frivolous tastes of fashion. The arrangement of the sleeping apartments was on a scale of equal magnificence. French dressing tables, with all their paraphernalia of Sevres china and crystal; Psyche glasses, in frames of ivory and gold; beds of rosewood, inlaid with ivory, and canopied with gold and silver, were among the decorations. But should one seek to ascend still higher—the upper rooms, the servants' apartments, uncarpeted, unfurnished, destitute of all the comforts which are as necessary to domestics as to their superiors, would have been found to afford a striking contrast to the splendors of those parts of the mansion which were intended for display.

With all his good sense, Edward Waterton was yet weak enough to indulge a feeling of exultation as he looked round his magnificent house, and felt himself "master of all he surveyed." His thoughts went back

to the time when the death of his father had plunged the family almost into destitution—when his mother had been aided to open a little shop, of which he was chief clerk, until the kindness of his old uncle had procured for him a situation in a wholesale store, which had finally enabled him to reach his present eminence. He remembered how often he had stood behind a little counter to sell a penny ball of thread or a piece of tape—how often he had been snubbed and scolded at when subject to the authority of a purse-proud employer—and, in spite of his better reason, he felt proud and triumphant. His self-satisfaction was somewhat diminished, however, by the sight of a bill drawn upon him by his brother-in-law in Paris, for the sums due on this great display of elegance. Ten thousand dollars—one third of his wife's fortune—just sufficed to *furnish* that part of their new house which *was* intended for display. Thus seven hundred dollars was cut off from their annual income, to be consumed in the wear and tear of their costly gewgaws; another thousand was devoted to the payment of interest on the mortgage which remained on his house; so that, at the very outset of his career, Edward found himself, notwithstanding his wife's estate, reduced to the "*paltry two thousand a year*" which he derived from his business.

But he had too much false pride to confess the truth to his wife, and at once to alter their style of living. Each had been deceived in their estimate of the other's wealth. Laura's income had been large enough, while she remained single, to allow her indulgence in every whim, and Edward, ambitious of the reputation of a man of fashion, after slaving all the morning in his

office, had been in the habit of driving fast trotting horses, or sporting a tilbury and tiger in Broadway, every afternoon, spending every cent of his income, and giving rise to the belief among the young men that he was very rich, while the old merchants only looked upon him as very imprudent. They were now to learn that their combined fortunes would not support the extravagancies of a household, but Laura, accustomed to the command of money from childhood, knew not its value, because she had never known its want, and her husband shrunk from the duty of enlightening her on the subject, by informing her of their real situation.

By the time the arrangements of their house were completed, and had been admired, envied, and sneered at by her "dear five thousand friends," the season arrived for Mrs. Waterton's usual visit to Saratoga. Her husband of course accompanied her, with rather a heavy heart, for he knew that only by close attention to business he could hope to provide the necessary funds for all such expenditures, although he had not sufficient moral courage to confess that he was so closely chained to the galley of commerce. The usual round of gayety was traversed—the summer was spent in lounging at different watering places—and the autumn found them returning, heartily wearied, to their splendid home. With the assistance of some kind *suggestors*, Mrs. Waterton now planned a series of entertainments for the coming winter, and Charles listened with ill-dissembled anxiety to the schemes for balls, parties, soirees, musical festivals and suppers. There was but one way to support all this. Charles determined to extend his business, and instead of confining himself to

a regular cash trade, he resolved to follow the example of his neighbors, and engage in speculation. Accordingly, he sold his wife's stock in several moneyed institutions, and, investing the proceeds in merchandise, commenced making money on a grander scale. This was in the beginning of the year '36, and every one knows the excitement of that momentous season; a season not soon to be forgotten by the bankrupt merchants, the distressed wives and the beggared children who can date their misfortunes from the temporary inflation of the credit system, by which that fatal year was characterized. Mr. Waterton's books soon showed an immense increase of business, and, upon the most moderate calculation, his profits could scarcely be less than from eight to ten thousand dollars within six months. This was doing pretty well for a man who had formerly been content with a "paltry two thousand a year," but as avarice, like jealousy, "grows by what it feeds on," Edward began to think he might as well make money in more ways than one. He therefore began to buy real estate, and *pine lands* in Maine, *wild tracts* in Indiana, *town lots* in Illinois, together with the thousand schemes which then filled the heads of the sanguine and the pockets of the cunning, claimed his attention and obtained his money; while, at the same time, the fashionable society of New-York were in raptures with Mrs. Waterton's splendid parties, her costly equipage, and her magnificent style of dress.

"Have you counted the cost of all these things, Edward?" said his old uncle, as he entered the house one morning, and beheld the disarray consequent upon a large party the previous night.

"Yes, uncle, I think I have," said Edward, smiling, as he sipped his coffee, at the old man's simplicity. "The fellows who manage these affairs soon compel us to count the cost, for when I came down this morning, I found on the breakfast table this bill for nine hundred and fifty-four dollars."

"Nine hundred dollars, Edward! You don't mean to say that your party last night cost that sum?"

"I do, my dear sir, and considering that the bill includes every thing but the wines, I do not consider it an exorbitant one; however, the elegant colored gentleman who takes all this trouble for me does not charge me quite so much as he would if I employed him less frequently."

The old man looked round and sighed. The apartments were in sad disorder, for the servants, overcome by the fatigues of the previous day, had followed the example of their master, and stolen from the morning the sleep they had been denied at night. A bottle lay shivered in one corner of the supper room, the champagne with which it had been filled soaking into the rich carpet—a piece of plum-cake had been crushed by some heedless foot into the snow-white rug which lay before the drawing-room fire—the sweeping draperies of one of the curtains was still dripping with something which bore a marvellous resemblance to melted ice cream, and the whole suite of apartments wore that air of desolation which usually characterizes a "banquet hall deserted."

"Do you calculate the destruction of furniture in counting the cost of your parties, Edward?" asked Mr. Waterton.

"Oh no—that of course is expected ; furniture, you know, becomes old-fashioned and requires to be renewed about every three years, and therefore one may as well have the use of it while it is new."

"You must have a vast addition to your fortune if you expect to pay for all these things."

"My dear sir," replied the nephew, with a most benignant smile at his uncle's superlative ignorance of his affairs ; "my dear sir, you do not seem to know that, in the course of about three years, I shall be one of the richest men in New-York."

"Do you sell on credit ?" asked the old man, significantly.

"Certainly ; everybody does so now."

"Well, then, my boy, take an old man's advice, and don't count your chickens before they are hatched ; don't live on ten thousand a year when that sum exists only in your ledger. Call in your debts, and when your customers have *paid*, then tell me how *much* you have *gained*."

"My dear uncle, you are quite obsolete in your notions. I wish I could induce you to enter with me into a new scheme ; it would make your fortune."

"I am content with my present condition, Edward ; my salary of eight hundred a year is quite sufficient for the wants of a bachelor, and leaves me a little for the wants of others ; nor would I sacrifice my peace of mind and quiet of conscience for all the fortunes that will ever be made by speculation."

"It is not necessary to sacrifice either peace or principle in making a fortune, uncle."

"You have not seen the end yet, my dear boy ; I

have lived long enough to behold several kinds of *speculative mania*, and all terminated in a similarly unfortunate manner. It is a spirit of gambling which is abroad, and I am old-fashioned enough to believe that money thus obtained never does good to any one. It is like the price of a soul: the devil is sure to cheat the unhappy bargainer."

"How I hate to hear people talk about business," lisped Mrs. Waterton, as she sat listlessly in her loose wrapping-gown at the breakfast table; I think no one ought to mention the word before ladies."

The old man looked at her with ill-disguised contempt.

"It will be well for you, young lady," said he, "if you never have to learn the necessity of a knowledge of business."

Laura put up her pretty lip, but was silent, for she was much too indolent, and rather too well bred, to get angry.

Edward Waterton had given his uncle what he believed to be an accurate view of his circumstances. Excited beyond the bounds of sober sense by his seeming success, he was as sanguine a dupe as ever bled beneath the leech-craft of speculation. His real estate, which he *very moderately* estimated at *quintuple* its cost, formed, *at such prices*, an immense fortune. His book debts were enormous, for his money was scattered east, west, north, and south, and in consequence of giving long credits, he was enabled to obtain exorbitant profits. But the Eldorado whose boundaries seemed so accurately defined on paper, became exceedingly indistinct as he fancied himself about to approach its shores.

The following year began to afford tokens of coming trouble. Credit was still good, but money had entirely disappeared from the community, and men who had learned to make notes in order to *acquire fortunes*, were now obliged to continue their manufacture in order to *avoid ruin*. Rumors of approaching distress arose in the money market; men began to look with distrust upon their fellows, and as unlimited confidence in each other had been the foundation of the towering edifice of unstable prosperity, the moment that was shaken, the whole structure fell crumbling to the earth. As soon as doubt arose, destruction was at hand, and at length one wild crash of almost universal bankruptcy startled the dreamers from their golden visions.

* * * * *

One fine morning in the spring of 1838, the doors of one of the most stately houses in — street, were thrown open to the public, and the auctioneer's flag waving from the window gave a general invitation to every passer by. That ominous red flag! no less significant of evil than the black banner of the rover of the seas; for it is ever the signal of the disruption of household ties. That ominous red flag! sometimes betokening the instability of fortune—sometimes the work of death—sometimes telling of blighted fortunes—sometimes of broken hearts, but *always* of discomfort and disquiet. And yet few things will so readily collect a concourse of people as that scarlet harbinger of destruction. There may be found the regular auction-haunters, men of idleness, bachelors, perhaps, glad to find an hour or two killed beneath the auctioneer's hammer—single ladies of small fortunes, who have nothing

to do for themselves, and have not yet learned the luxury of doing something for their neighbors—notable housewives, actuated by a sense of duty and a love of economy, who waste *nothing but time* in their hunt after bargains—young ladies who come to see how such persons furnished their houses—and perhaps some would-be connoisseur in search of old pictures, which, if they have only hung long enough over a smoky fireplace, may be classed with the works of the old masters.

On the morning in question, however, unusual attractions were offered to the visitors of such places, for it was the abode of wealth, and luxury, and taste, which was thus desecrated—the mansion of the Watertons! The rich carpets were disfigured by many a dirty footstep,—the velvet couches bore the impress of many a soiling touch, and many a rude hand was laid upon the delicate and costly toys which had once been the admiration of the fashionable visitants of the family. Among the crowd were two of that *numerous tribe* found in the very midst of fashionable life, who have learned the trick of combining meanness and extravagance—women who will spend hundreds upon a shawl, and at the same time beat down the wages of a poor sempstress until she is almost compelled to purchase with life itself the bread which ought to sustain life. Such were the two who now seated themselves in the drawing-room of the ruined family, in order to be in the *right place* when certain articles were put up for sale.

“I want nothing here,” said one, with a half scornful air, “except those mosaic tables; the carpets and curtains are ruined by carelessness, and no wonder, for Mrs. Waterton was a wretched housekeeper.”

"And I only mean to buy that workbox," said the other; "Mrs. Waterton told me it cost a thousand francs in Paris, and I am sure it will not sell for one-fourth its cost."

"By the way, have you seen her since her husband's failure?"

"Oh no, I shouldn't think of calling upon her when in so much distress; besides, I am told she has refused to see any one. Did you hear how she behaved when she heard of Mr. Waterton's reverses?"

"No, I know nothing about her since she gave her last grand party, which was followed in a few days by his bankruptcy."

"Why, I was told she raved like a mad woman, reproached her husband in the vilest terms for thus reducing her to poverty, taunted him with his low origin, and accused him of the basest deception."

"I can easily believe it, for these mild, placid, milk-and-water women have got the temper of demons when once aroused."

"I have not told you all yet; she refused to give up her jewels, which were known to be of great value, and having secretly employed a person to dispose of them for her, she took passage for France, and actually set sail a few days since, merely informing her husband *by letter* that such was her purpose. This letter she placed in such hands that she knew he would not receive it until the vessel was under weigh, and he thus learned that she had deserted him for ever. She pretends to have gone to join her sister; but there is a whisper of a certain black-whiskered foreigner who is

the companion of her voyage. At any rate, whether he goes with her or not, he is a fellow-passenger."

"Where is Mr. Waterton?"

"At the house of his old uncle, who will probably be obliged to transfer him to a lunatic asylum before long; but hush, the auctioneer is coming."

I have told you the *denouement* as related by the heartless women of the world, but like most of their species, they were only *half right*. Mrs. Waterton *did* go with the intention of seeking her sister's protection, but ere she arrived there, she was persuaded to travel farther under the protection of her fascinating friend. Mr. Waterton did not enter a lunatic asylum, but recovered his senses so fully that he obtained a divorce from his wife, and is now a fellow-clerk with his uncle; enjoying as much tranquillity as a remembrance of his former follies, his imprudent choice, and his three years of wedded life will allow.

to
vi
fr
s
I
!

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

"Why, this is very midsummer madness!"

"**THEN** you will not accompany me to Niagara, uncle?"

"No; I will go any where else with you, Harry, but I cannot visit Niagara with other feelings than those of pain."

"Your favorite, Lucy Lisburne, is to be of the party; will not that inducement tempt you?"

"For your sake, boy, I am glad she is going, for she is one who well deserves the love of a noble heart, but do not ask me to revisit a scene so full of sorrowful recollections. I could not bear to look upon the wonders of the mighty cataract now. Years have passed since last I trod its rocky barriers, and the gentle being who then was my companion, has long since faded from the earth, but the remembrance of her bright face haunts me still—a lovely and yet fearful spectre of the past. Listen to the tale of my early folly, Harry, and you will learn how deeply the events of a single moment may influence one's whole existence.

"I had just completed my collegiate studies, and the severe struggle by which alone I was enabled to secure the highest prizes in my class, had exhausted both mental and bodily strength. I determined, there-

fore, to spend a month or two in vagabondizing, previous to devoting myself to the acquisition of my future profession ; and taking with me the smallest possible quantity of baggage, I went on board a North River steamboat, intending to be governed entirely by my own truant inclination in my future course. The excitement which I had undergone, had left me suffering under such extreme lassitude of spirits, that I preferred travelling quite alone, and, on looking round among my fellow passengers, was rejoiced to find myself an isolated individual, surrounded by entire strangers. After amusing myself for some time, with quiet speculations upon the character and manners of my travelling companions, I was fast lapsing into one of those delicious reveries which abstract the mind so completely from the common things of earth, when my eye accidentally fell upon my opposite neighbor, and, for once, reality seemed to me more beautiful than fancy. I never saw a lovelier face than hers. The features, when in repose, might have served a painter as a model for a Madonna, so soft was the outline, so perfect the symmetry. Her complexion, pale, but so delicate, that the branching of the thread-like veins was distinctly visible on her fair brow—eyes of that hazel hue, which is ever so full of tenderness—lips like the inner leaves of a rose-bud, and long, light-brown curls, flinging over the whole countenance just the proper degree of shadow—all combined to form a picture which, in perfection of form, and richness of coloring, was unrivalled. Absorbed in placid thought, the young girl sat looking out upon the water, and it was long before a change in her position compelled me

to withdraw my gaze from her beauty. When I did so, however, I was almost as much struck with the appearance of her travelling companion. He was an old man, with a countenance of singular mildness and benignity. His features were eminently handsome, and his high bald forehead added a very intellectual character to his face, while the thick curling locks of silvered black, which fell on his shoulders in a manner *then* rarely seen, gave him an almost apostolic air. The strong similitude between the two, suggested the idea of the relationship which existed between them, and notwithstanding the deep lines with which time had marred the elder face, it was evident that they were father and daughter.

“My close observation of them soon enabled me to discover that they did not belong to the higher orders of society. There was little in the young girl’s manner to betray a want of refined breeding, but still a few trifling circumstances, taken in connection with her father’s mode of address, convinced me of the fact. A young collegian is rarely destitute of that kind of moral courage which wiser folks term impudence, and I determined to make use of my peculiar endowments of that nature, in order to form an acquaintance with the strangers. Chance favored my design. The father had forgotten to procure a newspaper; I offered him mine, and this little courtesy on my part, I took care should be repaid by a prolonged discussion of the politics of the day. We had some very agreeable conversation, and while I could not help noticing that the old man’s language was that of one whose early education had been very defective, I was greatly struck

with the raciness of his remarks, and his keen insight into human nature. The daughter sat, a silent, but attentive listener, and, as she smiled at our occasional jests, I thought her face even lovelier in its mirthful than in its pensive expression. At the tea-table, I had an opportunity of devoting myself particularly to the daughter, for the old man seemed to have little idea of waiting upon a lady, and I found my civilities by no means ill-received. Indeed, by the time the hurried meal was finished, we had become quite familiar, and, as I handed the beautiful girl up to the promenade deck, I ventured to take a seat beside her without meeting any repulse.

“My suspicions of their entire ignorance of the observances of good society, were now confirmed by the imprudent frankness with which she allowed herself to be drawn into conversation by me. As the boat glided rapidly through the majestic Highlands, we talked of the beauty of the scenery, until the moon rose high above the verdant hills, and then ‘the hour, the place, the scene,’ led us into poetry, romance, and sentiment. Among my college-mates, I could have laughed to scorn such vague fancies, such crude ideas, such wild visions of future life, as seemed to fill the mind and heart of my artless companion. But there was something sacred from ridicule in her earnestness and simplicity; her very guilelessness was her security, and as I listened to her youthful feelings, uttered by such bright lips, and with such sweet looks, I felt that the pleasantest of all studies was the study of a young and pure heart. The time passed like a dream. The old man, who had been pacing the deck, occa-

sionally stopping to exchange a word with us, now grew weary, and desired his daughter to retire. She obeyed with evident reluctance, and left me musing on the singular contradiction between her evident cultivation of mind, and her entire ignorance of the decorum and etiquette which society has prescribed as rules of conduct to its subjects. The witchery of her exceeding beauty, her modest bearing, her delicacy of sentiment, and her innocent frankness, were irresistible attractions to a young and ardent boy, as I then was. That she belonged to a respectable class of society, I could not doubt; and I came to the conclusion that her father was one of that large portion of our citizens who are '*in transitu*'—persons yet in the *chrysalis*, or rather spinning the web of their future splendors. I imagined he would be found to be some petty shopkeeper, who, in anticipation of wealth had bestowed on his daughter all the advantages which could be derived from a good education, while I considered her manners as evincing a continual struggle between early habitual associations, and acquired knowledge. However the adventure promised amusement, and I determined to continue in their company, at least, until the novelty of the affair was past.

"The next morning I managed to discover that a visit to Niagara and Canada formed part of their projected tour, and, consequently, that also became the course which I designed to pursue. The girl did not attempt to conceal her satisfaction, when she found that I was still to continue with them, and although her father looked grave, and fixed on me a searching glance, yet, as soon as he learned my name, (of which

I took an early opportunity to inform him,) his scruples, whatever they were, seemed to vanish. In this point, he had a decided advantage, over me, for although my family was so well known, that the simple announcement of our name was a guarantee for our rank in society, yet, when he reciprocated my confidence, I only learned that he was '*Charles Grayson*.' I was, therefore, little wiser respecting them, than I had been when I first met him, but, however, I was in pleasant company, and with the thoughtlessness of a boy, I determined to enjoy it.

"I will not lead you step by step, along the perilous path of passion which I then pursued. I learned that Juliet, (her very name was enough to awaken the susceptible nature of a Shakspeare-worshipper,) had just returned from the Moravian school at Bethlehem, where she had spent the last five years, in the completion of her education. She was tolerably well skilled in music, spoke a little German, was thoroughly versed in all *useful* knowledge, and, in fact, had acquired all that she could learn among that simple and practical sect of Christians. But she was as ignorant as a babe of the ways of the world; and the guilelessness of her nature, while it added new charms to her loveliness, rendered her position in society one of difficulty and danger. Enthusiatic and affectionate—her heart filled with undeveloped passion, and her head teeming with the romantic visions fostered by many a stealthily-read novel and poem—beautiful as a painter's dream, and artless as an infant, she was, altogether, the most fascinating creature I ever knew. She was certainly superior to her station in society—superior in manners, in

taste, and in feeling—for through all her father's good sense and quick wit was perceptible a taint of vulgarity, which clearly showed that he had learned more from men than from books, and that his studies had not lain among the polished and *characterless* denizens of high life.

"Juliet was keenly alive to the beauties of nature. Brought up on the banks of the romantic Lehigh, she had learned to appreciate the charms of fine scenery, and it was truly delightful to witness her enthusiasm for the picturesque. As we climbed the cliffs at Trenton Falls, beholding one after another of the succession of pictures which meet the eye, as one ascends the rocky valley, I watched the varying expression of her exquisite countenance, and felt that of all the beauties of nature, the loveliest is the 'human face divine.' Her eyes would dilate, her cheeks glow, and throwing aside her bonnet, she would bound along the rough path, with her long silken curls tossed by the breeze, seeming to forget every thing in the enjoyment of the moment. It was perfect rapture to me, then to draw her aside into some shady nook, and while she was thus excited, to listen to the fresh and pure feelings which seemed to gush spontaneously from the heart. By the time we reached Niagara, our intimacy had so increased, that in all our little excursions, though her father generally accompanied her, yet she became my especial charge, and, at length, the old man, unable to keep pace with our activity, contented himself to remain at the hotel, while we wandered, as we would, amid the wonders of the cataract.

"Who ever visited Niagara *for the first time*, with-

out being sensible of an elation and elevation of spirit, which almost seemed like a species of mental intoxication? I look back with wonder to the excitement of that period. I remember how coolly and rationally I managed all my daily affairs—I ate and drank and slept, I looked and acted, just like the hundreds of people whom I saw around me, and yet I verily believe that I was then on the very verge of insanity. I forgot every thing except the wonders by which I was surrounded, and the beautiful companion who beheld them with me. Hour after hour we wandered together amid the secluded shades of Goat Island, our steps haunted by the deep music of the rushing waters, and threading our devious way ever back to the fearful brink of the cataract, to find new excitement and bewilderment in the oft-seen view. What a strong toil was woven about me then! The greatest marvel of the universe was before my eyes—the melody of woods and waters was mingling in my ears with the sweet voice of one of the fairest of God's creatures—and a lovely being of almost unearthly loveliness was at my side, bending on me such looks of innocent tenderness as might have thrilled the soul of an anchorite. I was fascinated—spell-bound—maddened.

“One morning—it was the crisis of my destiny—we crossed to the Canada side, and instead of taking the usual route to the Aqueduct house, on the brink of the cataract, we climbed the hill along the path generally used by the soldiers of the garrison. It was a difficult and, in some places, a dangerous ascent, but it rendered Juliet so dependent upon my strong arm, that I scarcely felt its fatigue. We reached the top, flushed

and heated with the toilsome way, and were rejoiced to find that the throng of visitors had all dispersed when we arrived at the house. Juliet gayly proposed, that as there were no idle spectators to behold us, we should refresh ourselves by going *under the fall*; and with a moment's reflection, I immediately summoned the guide to lead us amid the 'Phlegethon of waters.' We retired to array ourselves in proper costume for the enterprise, and when we met again at the foot of Table Rock, we enjoyed a merry laugh at the sudden transformation which each had undergone. Our dress was of the rudest kind, and I might have served as a model for a young smuggler, while Juliet was attired in the coarse yet picturesque garb of a fish-wife. But no change of garment could conceal her exquisite beauty, and as she flung back her long curls beneath the coarse straw hat, which had been tied on to protect her from the dashing spray, her face was that of a youthful Hebe.

The little guide—he was but a boy—fastened one hand in the rope girdle which bound her waist, and led the way, while I followed close behind. The path was steep and slippery, and a deluge of water, which nearly blinded us, met us at the very entrance of the pass. But as we proceeded, the overhanging cliff became broader, and at length we reached a point, where we were so far sheltered from the pouring stream, that we could raise our heads and look around us. The light which struggled faintly through the mighty mass of tumbling waters, was like that of the pale gray dawn; and as we leaned against the rock, and looked into the terrific liquid arch which spanned



our narrow pathway, we almost fancied that we could feel the vibration of the very stones beneath our feet. It was like standing on the threshold of eternity, for the ever-sounding waters, rushing on and on and on, disturbed the mind like the vague image of infinity, and we felt that it needed but one plunge to discover to us the mysteries of another world. Juliet drew close to my side, awe-struck and overwhelmed with emotion, but the guide urged us onward, and we followed him until our feet touched the last step between life and death. As we were returning, the guide lost his hat; you smile at my mentioning so trivial a circumstance, Harry, but you have not yet learned how 'trifles light as air' often decide our future fate. The little fellow saw it on the rock below, and, too familiar with danger to fear, he begged us to remain beneath the shelter of the impending rock, until he should regain it. How many are there in the world whose whole lives have been colored by the events of a single moment! I drew Juliet towards me—my arm encircled her slender waist—the impulses of youthful passion overpowered the religious awe which the solemn beauty of the scene had awakened—I whispered in her ear those burning words which trace themselves upon the heart of the listener in characters never to be effaced, and even amid the roar of the eternal cataract, those words were *heard* and *answered*. Her head rested on my shoulder—her lips met mine, and that kiss, thrilling like a heartquake through every nerve, sealed the fate of both. The guide returned—speechless from excess of feeling, we silently followed him, and as we once more looked into each other's

face, beneath the unclouded light of a summer's sky, the past moment seemed like a delicious dream.

I now looked upon Juliet as my affianced wife, but my delirium of passion did not blind me to the consequences of my rashness. My father, an old Virginian, was one of the proudest men I ever knew. Notwithstanding all the changes of fashion, he still displayed in the drawing-room, a widely-branching genealogical tree, emblazoned with many curious devices, and he often pointed out with no small degree of complacency, the name of Sir Aylmar de Vavasour, who first planted its root in merry England, in the time of the Norman Conqueror. Indeed, he carried his pride of descent to an almost ludicrous excess, and while his great wealth rendered him perfectly indifferent to the dowry of a bride for his son, he was especially fastidious respecting the family of those with whom my sister and myself associated. This was an idle and foolish prejudice in our land of equality, but it had been the besetting sin of my grandfather even when he chose America as the home of his adoption, and perhaps *I* am not quite free from it, although at that time passion silenced all other feelings. In despite of my fervent love for Juliet, I had many secret misgivings of heart. I dared not think of the future; the images of an angry parent, and a sneering world, were ever before me, when I contemplated the moment that was to bind me to her by the irrevocable bonds of marriage. I possessed a small estate, bequeathed to me by an uncle, and as this secured me a present competence, I determined to gain the consent of Juliet and her father, to a private union. The idea of breaking off our engagement never once occurred to

me, for if I had been fascinated by her charms when I first beheld her, how much more was I under her influence now, when the spell of her innocent tenderness was added to the witchery of her beauty. My nature was impetuous, but frank and generous. I told Mr. Grayson of my love for his daughter, without attempting to conceal my consciousness of my father's displeasure. He listened to me with quiet satisfaction, and while he candidly acknowledged that he would gladly bestow on me her hand, he counselled me to keep our engagement a secret, until I could ascertain my father's sentiments. This exactly suited my own views of the matter, and after an absence of two months, we returned to our native city, with feelings very different from those which actuated us when we bade it adieu.

"I cannot describe the mingled feelings with which I prepared to visit Juliet for the first time in her own house, for I feared lest I should meet something offensive to my refined habits of life. But I was mistaken. Every thing about the house was plain and neat, without making any pretension to elegance. Juliet's piano was the only ornament of the little parlor, and when the fair creature met me at the door with a blush and a smile, I felt that for such a home and such a companion, I could willingly resign the appliances of wealth. But my feelings underwent a sudden and painful revolution at the sight of Mrs. Grayson. Large and unwieldy in person, yet bearing traces of the coarse beauty which must have characterized her in youth—with a voice like a parrot, and manners marked by a kind of boisterous good humor, it seemed scarcely possible that such a being could be the mother of my gentle Juliet.

Her unmitigated vulgarity seemed to reflect itself on every thing around her, and even her daughter appeared to lose a portion of her delicate grace, when she appeared beside her mother.

I began now to scrutinize the habits and pursuits of the father also. His character was to me, a perfect riddle. There was, at times, a jeering tone of skeptical philosophy in his remarks, which seemed quite inconsistent with the careful performance of all social duties for which he was so remarkable. He acted like a man of virtue and honor, as far as I could judge, but he often uttered sentiments worthy of a consummate scoundrel. He held the opinion that men were only honest when their interests led them to be so, and he seemed to delight in the expression of startling paradoxes or painful truths, in the history of human nature. Nothing could be more ill suited to the unsuspicious and confiding character of an impetuous youth, than the cold, sarcastic, sneering philosophy of one who had grown gray in worldly wisdom. Yet the calm, benevolent countenance of the old man seemed to belie his own experience, and but for an occasional sinister expression in his deep-set eyes, and a scornful smile which sometimes flitted over his handsome mouth, his face was that of one who had drank only from the sweet waters of truth and goodness.

"I was sensible, too, of a singular change in my feelings towards Juliet. I still loved her with the most impassioned tenderness, but from the moment that I had pledged my faith to her, I became sensitive to every thing that could detract from her charms. I watched her every movement, and her ignorance of conven-

tional forms, which had once seemed to me so captivating, now kept me in constant dread lest she should, in some unguarded moment, expose herself to ridicule. I became a critic of her dress, her manners and her language. She was now mine—destined to be my future wife, and I grew morbidly alive to the minute defects of her character. At first, I had compared her *naïveté* and freshness of feeling with the cold manners and rigid decorum of the daughters of fashion ; but now I found myself contrasting the elegant self-possession and refined conversation of those very persons, with the occasional errors in language, and the blushing timidity of my future bride. I believe Juliet felt the change, but she uttered no complaints. She studied to adapt herself to my wishes in every respect. She withdrew from all intercourse with her former associates ; she dressed with the most scrupulous simplicity, and she applied herself diligently to the study of the books I had recommended.

“ Alas ! the first phase of passion had already past ! Imagination had robed her as a divinity, and set her on high as an object of worship, but the illusion was rapidly vanishing. She was still as beautiful, still as gentle, still as fond as when I first looked upon her exquisite loveliness ; why, then, did I feel such a void in the heart once filled by her image ? It was because mine was a passion born of the excited senses, and not the deep and enduring love which springs from an appreciation of moral and intellectual, as well as physical beauty. Well might he, whose life was but a succession of passionate dreams, exclaim :

“ ‘ Who loves, raves—’tis youth’s frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still, as charm by charm unwinds,
Which robed our idols.’ ”

“ The very repugnance to complete my engagement with Juliet, which I felt growing up within my heart, determined me to hasten its fulfilment. I feared my own weakness of purpose, and actually began to experience a sort of dread, lest I should hereafter be tempted to break my troth. I therefore determined to make her my wife in secret, and then to bury ourselves in Paris until I should be able to add the polish of society to her native charms. I hoped that, in the course of a few years I should be able to return to my native land, and present to my friends a wife whose loveliness and elegance would remove all suspicion of a lowly origin, while I trusted to my own tact, and her father’s shrewd worldliness for aiding me to preserve the secret. It was a romantic scheme, but to a boy of nineteen, it seemed a perfectly feasible one, and I accordingly communicated as much of it to Mr. Grayson as I deemed necessary to ensure his acquiescence. He assented to my plans more readily than I had expected, and even exhibited a degree of eagerness for its accomplishment, which almost disgusted me. Having announced, therefore, to my father, my intention of visiting Europe, I prepared to put my designs in execution. I had never met with much affection at home, since the death of my mother, and therefore I felt little remorse at the undutiful course of conduct which I was about to pursue, but it did seem to me a most singular state of affairs, when I found myself on the very verge of a clandestine

marriage, while my feelings, in spite of myself, revolted against it. There was a fearful struggle in my bosom between a sense of honor and a consciousness of declining passion, but I determined that though my life might be an unhappy one, it should never be burdened with the weight of a broken vow.

"A state-room in one of the Havre packet-ships had been engaged for 'Mr. Vavasour and *friend*;' our baggage was already on board; the time appointed for our marriage, was the evening preceding the day on which the ship intended to sail, and we had made our arrangements for Juliet to take possession of her state-room at an early hour in the morning so as to avoid coming into collision with any of my friends. The marriage was to be solemnized in the strictest privacy. Juliet's parents, and one or two of their friends, sworn to secrecy, were all that I would allow to be present, and I had engaged a young friend, who had just entered the church, to perform the ceremony.

"It was the evening of a close and sultry day in August. The atmosphere had been excessively heated, and at nightfall commenced one of the severest tempests I ever witnessed. Peal after peal of thunder shook the vaulted roof of heaven, and blinding flashes of livid lightning lighted up the pitchy darkness of the clouded sky; the rain fell in torrents, and the force of the wind was absolutely terrific. The hour appointed for the solemnization of our marriage, came and passed, but our friend, the clergyman, dared not face the fury of the storm, and we were obliged to await his coming. It was a state of suspense perfectly intolerable to me, for I felt like one who had nerved himself to the per-

formance of some deed of heroism, and longs for the trial to be past. Juliet never looked more lovely. Her simple dress of spotless white—the single band of pearls, my bridal gift, which encircled her bright ringlets—the soft flush of maiden modesty upon her smooth cheek—the tender emotion which suffused her dove-like eyes with liquid lustre—all added to the wonderful beauty of her countenance.

“Two hours passed away in this state of expectancy, when, suddenly, the door-bell rung, and the well known voice of my friend was heard in the hall. Taking the hand of my trembling bride, after the delay of a few moments, I descended to the little parlor where I supposed we were now awaited; but ere I reached the door, a strange tumult arose within the apartment. Two men, roughly garbed, and dripping with rain, had followed the clergyman into the hall, and, as I entered the room, I beheld one of them on each side of Mr. Grayson, holding him with a grasp as strong as death, while the old man, pale, trembling, and affrighted, stood in perfect silence between them. My first impulse was to rush forward and release him, but one of them waving me off with one hand, exclaimed: ‘Beware, young man, how you interfere in the administration of justice.’

“‘What does all this mean?’ I asked; ‘if you want bail, I am ready.’

“‘Not so fast, sir,’ was the cool reply. ‘We have arrested this man on a *criminal* charge.’

“At these words, the terrified Juliet uttered a faint cry, and fell fainting into my arms. The scene which ensued, defies description. All was confusion and ter-

ror, and Mr. Grayson, yielding passively to the officers, allowed them to hurry him away ere one of us could recover presence of mind enough to ascertain the nature of the charge against him. My friend, the clergyman, however, volunteered to follow them, and I was left to listen to the loud bewailings of the unhappy wife, and to watch over the successive fainting-fits which had now seized the wretched Juliet.

“It was daylight ere Mr. ——— returned with his terrible tidings. His tale was almost incredible. Mr. Grayson, whose ostensible business was that of keeping a seaman’s clothing warehouse, had been, for many years, engaged in the traffic of *counterfeit money*. He had long kept up a regular communication with Canada, where was the principal establishment for the manufacture of spurious bills of the various banks, and he regularly received from thence certain sums, which he sold to all who were disposed to share the risk and the profit. But even this was not the worst feature of the fearful story. The police had long known of his nefarious transactions, but his safety had been purchased by the sacrifice of others. He had been employed as a sort of *decoy* to criminals less wily than himself, and as, year after year, he fed the insatiate appetite of justice with the victims whom he had himself enticed into this lawless traffic, he had been allowed to pursue his evil calling unmolested. He had become rich, and the impunity with which he had escaped for so many years, rendered him less cautious in his mode of proceeding. He had been tracked in his visit to the Havre packet, and the ministers of the law, fearing lest he meditated an escape from their hands, determined to grant him

no further immunity from punishment. The story was almost beyond belief. Here was a man who appeared a kind husband, an affectionate father, a good neighbor, a respectable member of society, and yet his daily business had been to entrap and ruin those who were too young or too miserable to resist temptation. He had educated his own child at a distance from all contact with evil, had imbued her with the strictest principles of honor and rectitude ; yet the greater part of his life had been spent in seducing the children of others from the paths of honesty, for many were the youth of both sexes, who, after being induced by him to pass the false bills (which he *sold*, but never *issued himself*,) were now expiating in a prison, the guilt which he had first instigated, and then denounced.

"I cannot narrate the sickening detail of all that occurred during the next few weeks. Juliet clung to the belief of her father's innocence, but anguish of mind had confined her to a bed of sickness, and a few pencilled words which were exchanged between us every evening, limited our intercourse. I suppose I might have asserted the privileges of a betrothed lover, and been allowed to watch beside her couch of suffering, but the tumult of my feelings was such, that I rather dreaded such painful interviews. In one of her notes, written just before the trial, she begged me to attend it, and bring her the first tidings of his acquittal, for of that result she did not permit herself to doubt. I obeyed her wishes only in part. I was present in court—I heard the terrible words which pronounced him *guilty* ! and sentenced him to imprisonment at *hard* labor for *fourteen years* ! It was a frightful scene. The old

man, with his silvery hair and mild countenance, was a study for an artist, as he looked sorrowfully upon his judges. He listened to his fearful doom in silence—a bitter smile crossed his quivering lip, and bowing to the court, he said in a low, clear voice, ‘I thank you, gentlemen; I did not think, till now, that I had so many years to live.’ A murmur ran through the apartment as he was led away, and even those who looked on him as a hardened sinner, could not choose but pity the gray-haired criminal.

“I had promised to bear the tidings to Juliet, but though I knew the anxiety with which she was awaiting me, I dared not enter the abode of such unutterable wretchedness. The next morning I received a note from her:

“‘Come to me,’ she said, ‘come, and let me find justice at your hand, since it is banished from the hearts of men. Tell me only that you are convinced of the integrity of my beloved father, and I will become your wife—even in the midst of all my agony I will become your own true and loving wife, and we will flee far from this cruel land, to some place where peace may yet abide.’

“I obeyed her summons, but all of human suffering and grief was concentrated in that dreadful meeting. Fully convinced of her father’s innocence, Juliet had never dreamed that the mere suspicion of such a stain upon his name had raised an insuperable barrier between us. Overwhelmed with grief for his cruel fate, she had never reflected how deeply her own was involved in it. She seemed to consider our union only *deferred* until the first violence of her sorrow should have subsided. Gradually the truth broke upon her mind. In the trustfulness of her guileless and loving

nature, she was long insensible to my vague intimations of a future fraught with still deeper anguish. Her head was resting on my bosom, her arms were about my neck at the very moment when my lips revealed to her the fatal necessity of a final separation between us. Kindly—tenderly as the truth was communicated to her, it yet came upon her like a thunderbolt. She rose from my embrace, and looked in my face with such an expression of pleading sorrow in her eyes, that my heart was wrung; but she uttered not a word as she slowly turned from me, and entered an adjoining room. She closed the door behind her, but I could hear the agonized sobs and convulsive breathing, which told of the overpowering emotion which she was suffering. She was deaf to all my entreaties to be permitted to speak one moment with her, and bidding me leave the house if I valued her future peace, I dared not disobey. On the following morning I received this letter from her :

“ ‘ This is the last, Henry—you will never receive another letter from me. Why did you come to trouble the calm current of my life? Yours has been a vain, selfish, wicked love, Henry; you know nothing of such deep affection as lives within my heart. I could follow you through shame and through sorrow, strong in my own purity and integrity, but you—you cannot take to your bosom the daughter of misfortune—the victim of man’s injustice. Go, Henry—forget me if you can; yet no—I will not pass like a shadow from your thoughts; you shall remember me while life remains to you, but I will be not like the one dark cloud upon your sunny path. When I am dead, you will think of me with mournful tenderness. What have I to live for? my father I shall never see again; he will go down to a felon’s grave, and I am alone—alone upon the earth. Yet I am so young—I am not yet eighteen Henry, and but a few weeks ago I was so happy! I do not mean to reproach you, my beloved,

but you shall never forget me—mark me, Henry Vavasour, you shall never forget me. Farewell—farewell; come to me when you read this, and you will see me for the last time; come.’

“In a paroxysm of terror I flew to the abode of the Graysons as soon as I read this wild and incoherent letter. It was early in the morning, but the windows were closed, and I heard the voice of loud weeping as I stood upon the threshold. I rushed into the house—I have a dim recollection of forcing my way through a dense crowd in the narrow hall, but I saw nothing until I found myself at the door of the inner apartment, into which I had seen Juliet enter. A group of women were gathered in the middle of the room—grave, cold, stern-looking men, stood around the bed which had been decked in snow-white draperies for our bridal—but I saw only the extended form of my beautiful, my beloved Juliet. She looked like one who had lain down to sleep after the fatigues of a merry dance. Her face was full of placid sweetness, her attitude was that of graceful repose, and I sprang to her side in utter bewilderment at the strange scene which surrounded us. Alas! it was the sleep of death. I bent forward to kiss her pale brow, and its touch shot like an icebolt through my blood. At the same instant, some one lifted her pillow, and while the long curls fell back from her forehead, a vial was drawn from its concealment beneath the clustering mass of ringlets. I heard a confused murmur of many voices—the word ‘*poison*’ reached my ears, and I remembered nothing more!

“When I recovered my senses, I had been for months the tenant of a private mad-house, and the doom of the wretched felon, as well as the untimely

fate of the lovely but misguided Juliet, had long ceased to be the topic of daily interest. Both are forgotten by the world, for Grayson died in his narrow cell, and the glorious beauty which excited my fatal passion has long since mouldered beneath the coffin-lid, though her form exists in my remembrance, a bright but terrific spectre of the past.

“The denunciations of Scripture have been literally fulfilled. The sin of the father has been visited heavily upon her who knew no sin, and I have learned the bitter lesson which all must know who ‘reap the whirlwind from the oft-sown wind.’ The passions of our youth become the severest stings of our later life, our errors often assume the awful character of crimes ; and this one folly of my boyhood has compelled me to bear unto my grave a weight of unutterable remorse ; that worst ‘burden of the heart—the heart whose sweat is gore.’ ”

WILFULNESS; OR, THE WIFE'S TALE.

"The thorns which I have reaped, are of the tree
I planted—they have torn me, and I bleed."

BYRON.

Letter from Mrs. Ormeston to her friend, enclosing the manuscript.

"You, alone, my dear friend, have judged me correctly: you, alone, have been willing to believe that I might be influenced by proper motives, in pursuing a course of conduct which, to the world, has seemed eccentric and censurable: you, alone, have defended me from the heavy charges of parsimony, unkindness to my family, and a want of affection towards those nearest and dearest to me. When I retired to this humble village, people wondered that I should quit the gay world; when I commenced a system of rigid economy, they called it meanness, because I was supposed to be in possession of a large estate; when my husband sought his amusements elsewhere than in his own home, I was accused of having made that home an unhappy one; and, to crown the whole, when I devoted all the energies of my nature to the education of my children—when I strove to keep them from the contact of falsehood and vice by an anxious and severe watchfulness over their young hearts, the good-natured world censured my rigid code of morals, and hinted at

my cold-heartedness. You, alone, were my champion, although even you could not account for all my conduct ; and therefore it is, that I now set myself to the task of combining the lights and shadows of my past life into one complete picture. I would have you to reserve it for the eye of affection only. I care little for the opinion of those who have so long misjudged me, but I would fain be fully understood, and, shall I add, appreciated by those whom I love. My sorrows have been many, but they were no unmerited punishment. Wilfulness has met its reward.

“ Few persons ever entered upon the gay scenes of life under happier auspices than myself. The only daughter of a rich and respected merchant, highly educated, refined in my tastes, taught to believe that my person was far from being unattractive, and surrounded with every luxury that affection could devise, or wealth procure, I certainly possessed every advantage that could promise a brilliant career. Among the earliest of my acquaintances, was the handsome and fashionable Henry Ormeston. His fine person and prepossessing manners, his noble talents and cultivated mind, made him the object of admiration to all who came within the sphere of his fascinations. He soon distinguished me by the most marked attentions, and I was not insensible to the triumph of conquering such a heart ; while the delicate homage which he paid to me, was the most subtle of all flattery to a refined and sensitive nature. I soon learned to consider him as first among his compeers, and my vivid imagination exalted him into a hero of goodness and genius. His tact in discovering character, enabled him to read mine with

perfect ease, and he was not slow in availing himself of such knowledge, for, ere I was aware of the nature of my own feelings, I learned to love him with the most passionate devotion. Ignorant and inexperienced in the customs of the world, I saw no obstacle in the way of my happiness, and when he preferred his suit, I referred him to my father, with a full belief that our wishes needed but to be known, in order to receive parental sanction. I was soon undeceived. My father refused his consent to our union, and forbade me to hold any further intercourse with Mr. Ormeston.

“My whole soul rebelled against this harsh decree. I knew my lover was not rich, and I could imagine no other cause for my father’s rejection of his suit. I therefore looked upon it as an act of gross injustice, and for this first instance of opposition to my will, I dared to accuse my good, kind father of *tyranny*. I shall never forget his grave and sad reproof.

“‘It is not Mr. Ormeston’s poverty, my daughter,’ said he, ‘to which I object, for you will have wealth enough to enrich any one whom your heart may prefer, but I think him deficient in stability of character. He has no strength of principle, and in the day of temptation he will be found weak. This was the prominent trait in his father, and the son resembles him too much in person and manners, to allow a hope that he differs in other respects.’

“‘What did you know of his father?’ I asked.

“‘He was a man whom everybody *liked*, and nobody *esteemed*,’ answered my father; ‘an excellent boon-companion, one of those persons who are always *invited to dinner-parties*, but never chosen to *fulfil a trust*. It is

for your own sake, my child, that I disapprove of young Ormeston, and remember that I have given you warning in time.'

"Perhaps this prohibition tended to increase my interest in the subject of it. I had been so much indulged, that I could not brook the least restraint, and I determined to judge for myself of the character of my suitor. But when a woman loves, and is beloved, there is little opportunity for the calm study of character. The very affection which actuates both, gives a degree of amiability to the temper and manners which often serves to disguise the real nature. Even if we see a few defects, we behold them in a softened light; and the contemplation of human nature in such circumstances, is like beholding a landscape in a Claude Lorraine glass; a *couleur de rose* is diffused over every thing.

"Ormeston was tenderly attached to me, but he was not one to sacrifice his inclinations to the real welfare of another. He continued to visit me until my father, aroused to anger by his pertinacity, forbade him to enter the house. We then met in secret, and corresponded clandestinely, until, at length, carried away by the romance of my feelings, I made him a solemn promise never to give my hand to another. I mean not to dwell upon all the painful details of my life at that time. It is but too common a tale. Infatuated by my blind passion, I forgot my duty to the father who had made me his idol, and while I cherished the affection which his prohibition had made criminal, I took no pains to conceal the ravages which disappointment was making with my cheerfulness and my health. In one

thing only I refused to follow my lover's suggestions ; I could not be persuaded to desert my parent in his old age, and by a clandestine marriage, to bring his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. But all his entreaties that I would resolutely conquer my foolish fancy, were unheeded. The more I was opposed, the more obstinately did I indulge my wayward humor ; I tried to believe myself a martyr to domestic persecution, and imagined I was acting the part of a heroine, when, to others, I only seemed a disobedient child.

"At length, wearied out by my perseverance, and fearing for my health, which had suffered greatly during this strife of feeling, my father yielded a reluctant consent to my marriage with Ormeston.

" 'Marry him, my child,' said he ; 'since you will have it so, I forbid you no longer to become his wife, but ask me not to be present at the sacrifice. My house shall be open to receive you, but I will not, by my presence, sanction the ceremony which makes you a victim.'

"Will you believe, my friend, that these words, wrung from out my father's anguished heart, by fears for his daughter's life, were received by me as a sufficient warrant for my marriage ? My romantic passion blinded me to every thing, and Ormeston, eager to avail himself of this advantage, urged a speedy union, lest my father should retract his unwilling promise. I was married—but never shall I forget the anguish of that day. My mother had long since slept in the silent tomb, but I had kind and dear relatives, and a father whom I tenderly loved, yet none of these friends of my childhood were around me when I stood at the altar to pledge my solemn vows. I listened to the awful ques-

tion which demands that all impediments shall be made known, and my own heart rose up in testimony against me, for I was even then acting in disobedience to the command which bids a child to honor its parent. I received the congratulations of gay friends and acquaintances, but the well known voices which could alone awake the echoes of my heart—the voices of tenderness and affection—mingled not with the mirthful tones of the giddy crowd ; and then, when it was too late, I felt that perhaps I had purchased at too dear a rate the gratification of my own wayward will.

“Immediately after the ceremony, we left town, and during our absence, I received a letter from my father, stating, that one half of his large double house had been refitted and newly furnished for my reception, and, that he expected that I should take up my abode there immediately upon my return. But he mentioned not the name of my husband, and in the first impulse of pride and anger, I exclaimed, ‘Never will I live under his roof as a daughter, unless he receives my husband as a son.’ To my great surprise, however, Henry did not seem to share my emotion on this subject. He soothed my irritated feelings—reasoned with me concerning my father’s very natural dislike to the man who had robbed him of his daughter’s affection—predicted a total change in my father’s notions when he should know him better, and counselled me to accept the old gentleman’s liberal offer, as he styled it. I cannot describe to you the pain which this *moderation* inflicted upon me. Had he indignantly rejected a proposition which seemed to make him a mere dependent upon his wife—had he refused to enter my father’s door, unless received

upon a proper footing, I should have loved him better than ever. But to my high-toned feelings there was something of degradation in accepting bounties so grudgingly bestowed ; and a suspicion, bitter as death—a doubt of my husband's nobleness of sentiment—for a moment awoke within my bosom. I answered my father's letter affectionately, and begged him to receive my husband even as a child to his old age. His reply now lies before me.

“ ‘ My child,’ he wrote, ‘ I cannot do what you ask ; Henry Ormeston, in marrying you, has taken from me a daughter, but he cannot give me a son. No man of delicate honor would have wedded a rich heiress under the circumstances which attended his union with you. Had he been engaged in any business which could promise a future maintenance, or had he any profession, and my sole objection had been his poverty, some excuse might be found for him in the ardor of youthful feeling. But he well knew, that, if your father did not continue to provide for you, subsequent to your marriage, he had neither the means nor the industry to do it. He knew that I disapproved of his character and his condition, and he became your husband with a perfect understanding that he was either reducing you to poverty, or placing himself in a state of dependence. I do not choose to see my daughter want, and therefore the latter alternative must be adopted. My opinion of him is unchanged, and therefore I cannot welcome him with cordiality ; he has entered my family against my will—he has taken advantage of a rich old man's love for his child, to secure himself a home ; and he enters that home only because your happiness requires it. I

mean not to quarrel with him ; I believe he loves you, and I trust he will continue to cherish you as I have done. Time will show whether I have been right or wrong in my estimate of his character. If I have been wrong, I shall be happier in expiating my error than I can be in indulging it, but, at present, I must be allowed to follow the bent of my own will.'

"What did I not suffer while reading this cruel letter, so full of tenderness to me, so cutting in its scorn of my husband ! But the pang was far greater with which I watched Henry while he read it. Flinging it down on the table with a careless laugh, he exclaimed, 'I see the old gentleman is a lineal descendant of "*hard-kopping Pete*"—a real copper-headed Dutchman.'

" 'What shall we do, Henry ?' was my first question.

" 'Do, Marian ? why, accept his offer, to be sure ; we must return to his house, and wait for the time he talks about, to conquer his prejudices.'

" 'But how can I bear to see you treated with neglect, Henry ?'

" 'Oh, we'll arrange all that ; you may be sure that we shall not come to an open quarrel, and, as I am prepared for his coldness, it will not wound me.'

"How wretched did I feel that night ! how soon had the illusion vanished from my eyes ! how soon had I learned that my father was wise in his estimation of Henry's character ! A feeling almost like contempt arose in my proud heart against him whom I had just sworn to honor, and I prayed most fervently to be preserved from the anguish of *ceasing to respect my husband*.

“With the shame if not the penitence of a prodigal, I returned to my father’s house, and found that every thing had been arranged for my accommodation. The apartments designed for me, occupied half of the large mansion, and were furnished in a style of elegance better suited to my father’s means than to my merit. I could not but hope that his prejudices against my husband would be softened, for I fancied that the fascinations against which I was not proof, could not but be powerful enough to avert a parent’s displeasure. But my father had no intention of placing me in a position to suffer from conflicting duties. He informed me that his housekeeper had orders to obey me as mistress of the establishment, but that he had reserved to himself the exclusive right to his own apartments; that his meals would be served to him there at his usual hours, and that whenever I chose to preside at his table, I should be welcome, provided I *came alone*. He also placed at my disposal a handsome carriage and several horses, requesting me only to remember that *his own equipage* and servants were never to be used by any but himself, unless, indeed, I should be inclined to accompany him in his daily rides. In short, I found a line drawn between us, across which neither was hereafter to pass. Every thing was so arranged, that, while I could command all the comforts of a luxurious household, for my husband, as well as myself, yet the privileges of a child—the right of free access to a parent’s presence, was only accorded to me, on condition that *he* was excluded. You will think my father wrong in this strange whim. It may be that he was—his conduct was certainly injudicious, since it offered a strong

temptation to meanness in the object of his prejudice, without affording him any opportunity of overcoming the original feeling of dislike.

"The affection of my husband, his brilliancy in society, and the pride I felt in the admiration which he excited, reconciled me, in some measure, to the peculiarities of my situation. Determining to neglect no duty towards my father, I devised a plan by which I could divide my time between both those beloved relatives. By rising early, I could preside at my father's breakfast-table, and still be in time to take my seat with my husband at his later meal. Dinner was generally served to my father while I was engaged in receiving or paying visits, but I made it a point never to be absent from his tea-table. Always kind and affectionate, he seemed to appreciate my attentions, but on no account would he bestow any notice upon Mr. Ormeston. When they passed each other in the spacious hall, a silent bow was exchanged between them, for my father's old-fashioned politeness would not allow him to omit an act of mere civility, yet not a word was ever uttered by either. And thus they lived in entire disunion but for the connecting link of my affection.

"It is impossible to describe what I suffered during all this time. Loving my father with sincerity, and regarding my husband with the deepest tenderness even after I had learned to doubt the purity of his morals, and the nobleness of his character, I was kept in a state of continual agitation, lest some open rupture should be the result of this coldness. Had Henry proved to be all my fancy had painted him, I should

have been less disquieted ; because I should then have had undoubting faith in the effects of time upon my father's stern temper. But, alas ! I had learned that there were spots upon the sun of my existence—I had discovered the worm at the root of the stately tree which overshadowed me, and I no longer trusted that a better knowledge of Mr. Ormeston's character would disarm my parent's resentment. I will not tell you the petty incidents which taught me how entirely I had been blinded to the defects in my husband's disposition. It was not that I sought them out—God knows how willingly I would have deceived myself into the belief that they did not exist—but they forced themselves upon me through the medium of trifles which I could not thrust aside. I had naturally a proud and uncompromising sense of the dignity of human nature—integrity was a part of my being—a high-toned sense of honor had been my characteristic in childhood, and had I lived in the days of the old-world Paladins, I could not have been more fastidious in my notions of delicacy and firmness of principle. This refined sentiment of honor, this innate consciousness, which is to honesty what its perfume is to the rose—the very soul of its existence—my husband did not possess. He was honest and honorable according to the easy definition of the world, but he lacked that proud integrity which could resist the temptation of its own interests. I discovered this early in my married life, and his constant drains upon the purse which my father always kept well supplied, tended to confirm my doubts of his refined sense of honor. Had such bounties been bestowed upon me by one who scorned me, I

would have begged my bread from door to door, and would have deigned to accept them. But Mr. Ormeston was content to pass through life in the least troublesome manner; and he accordingly occupied the stately mansion, drove the pampered horses, ordered the well-paid servants, and drank the fine old wine of a man who despised him too much to exchange a word with him.

“Five years passed away in this manner, during which time I became the mother of three children. The eldest of these was a boy, named after my father, and to him he seemed to transfer the fulness of that affection which, since my marriage, I had never been able, entirely, to regain. I rejoiced at this growing fondness for my son, and hoped that the sweet boy might be a bond of union between us all, especially as my father did not hesitate to avow his intention of making him his heir. This determination, however, was not very satisfactory to Mr. Ormeston, who had hoped that I should finally come into possession of the estate; but, with his usual careless good humor, he began to calculate the chances of benefit from this arrangement. Will you believe me when I tell you that, among other chances, he actually took into consideration the possibility of the *death of his child*—his first-born son—which would, of course, under such a will, ensure him the property. Until that moment I had trusted much to his good feeling and affectionate temper, but when I heard him hint at the remote possibility of deriving benefit from such a calamity, I almost hated him. Yet I tried—oh, how anxiously I tried—to forget it. I wanted, if possible, to retain my love and

esteem for him to whom I was bound by indissoluble ties, and I sought to shut my eyes to his faults. The world looked on us as possessing every requisite for happiness. They blamed my father's severe temper, and considered his implacable resentment as the only cloud in our sunny sky; but they little knew that I had a far more serious cause of sorrow in the unstable principles of my husband. Fond of gayety and dissipation of all kinds, he indulged his love for pleasure without restraint. The wine-cup, the turf and the gambling-table, all demanded a share of his time and money, and both were liberally bestowed. Yet was he ever kind and gentle to me; not a harsh word ever escaped his lips, and in all my remonstrances against the pernicious habits in which he indulged, he always replied with perfect good humor. Was I wrong in suspecting (as I sometimes did) that he would have been less tender, had the purse been in *his* hand, as well filled as it was in *mine*? Heaven only knows whether I wronged him, but when distrust creeps into the bower of wedded love, it leaves its poisonous taint over every flower in life.

"My father was taken ill, and, after lingering several weeks, he died. On his death-bed he admitted Henry to his presence, and as he bade him farewell, he added, 'I have summoned you, Mr. Ormeston, in order that you might not accuse me of carrying my resentment beyond the grave. Had you been less content with your condition as a dependent, I might have liked you better; had you refused to live under my roof upon the conditions which I prescribed, I should have known that I had wronged you in my first estimate of your

character; but your conduct has shown me that you were quite satisfied with my terms, and, of course, I do not regret my past conduct.' I listened to these words with bitter tears, for I felt that if Henry had but obeyed the impulses of my indignant spirit, at the outset of our married life, he would never have been compelled to occupy so equivocal a station.

"When my father's will was opened, it was found that he had bequeathed to me an annuity of four thousand dollars during my life—to my two youngest children, two thousand dollars per annum, while the bulk of the fortune, after deducting a few legacies to some old friends, was bestowed upon my eldest son, upon condition that as soon as he attained his seventh year, he should be sent to a boarding-school in *England*, and there allowed to remain until he had finished a collegiate course of education. In case of his death before he attained his majority, the estate was to remain in trust until my youngest child should be of age, when it was to be equally divided between them. I well understood the meaning of this will. It was designed to separate the heir of this fine estate from the evil example of his father, and, in the plenitude of his contempt for Mr. Ormeston, my father had thought that a disruption of the dearest ties of nature was preferable to exposing the boy to such influence. Thus I was called to make a *second* sacrifice, the result of the *first*—and, as I had given up my father for the sake of my lover, so I was now to resign my child to the care of strangers, in order to ensure his future welfare.

"Of course an immediate change in our mode of life was necessary. We had been in the habit of spending,

at least, ten thousand a year, and my annuity, which was all we now had, certainly would not support such extravagance. This gave me little pain, for I had ceased to value the appliances of wealth, since I had learned they could not bring me happiness, but it galled the pride of my husband to the very quick. He could not endure the thought of living in a less ostentatious manner ; he was not willing to resign the luxury of a carriage, and the pomp of a retinue of servants. But he was spared the mortification for the present. Our child had almost attained the age specified in the will for his removal to England, and as I was desirous of placing him in safe hands, we determined to accompany him, and to pass a few years in Europe. We accordingly left America about six months after my father's death, and of the detail of the next two years of my life, my dearest friends are ignorant.

" Our first care on our arrival in England, was to find a proper school for Charles. My heart bled at the thought of leaving him, but I knew that I should not obey the *spirit* of my father's will unless I separated him entirely from us. Having been unusually fortunate in our choice, we departed for Paris, in compliance with the wish of Mr. Ormeston, who seemed exceedingly desirous of enjoying the winter season in that gayest of cities. For my own part, I was perfectly indifferent as to my place of abode, so long as I could hear weekly from Charles, and as my other children were with me, I anticipated comfort if not happiness. But I soon found that I committed a sad mistake when I trusted one of his unstable character amid the labyrinths of Parisian vice. The freedom of French man-

ners, the skeptical tone of philosophy then in vogue, and the prevalence of the fatal habit of gaming, to which Mr. Ormeston was already addicted, were too well suited to his temper and habits. He needed little persuasion to induce him to launch forth upon the treacherous sea of vicious pleasure, and all my suspicions of his laxity of morals were more than confirmed. But ill suited as we were, we never had those disputes and bickerings which often render the married state one of perpetual torment. Always kind and polite, Mr. Ormeston was considered a model of conjugal tenderness, and as far as affectionate words and manners could make him so, he deserved all praise; but he lacked that disinterested love which makes the happiness of its object its first care. He was warmly attached to me; indeed his natural disposition led him to look with kindness upon every one who did not absolutely offend him, but still, selfishness was the foundation of all his actions. Had I ceased to be his daily companion, and to minister to his daily comfort, all love for me would soon have faded from his mind, like a dream, for his temper was too indolent to feel any emotion very vividly. Yet his winning manners, his unruffled good humor, his kind-heartedness, made me love him tenderly, in despite of his unsteadiness of character. I would have given worlds to have been able to look up to him with respect as well as affection, but alas! I could not be blind to his want of sincerity, his *truckling* spirit, and his habitual vices; I could not deceive myself into the belief that he was a fit model for the imitation of our children.

“But I was destined to drink, to the very dregs,

the cup which my own wilfulness had drugged. After a residence of nearly two years, we left Paris, and the precipitancy with which we quitted it, led me to suspect that something was wrong. I afterwards learned that some disgraceful transaction which occurred in one of those dens of vice, a gambling-house, had compelled Mr. Ormeston to seek safety in a rapid departure for his native land. We returned to New-York, and took lodgings at one of the fashionable hotels, where my husband was immediately surrounded by the companions of his former follies. His ostentatious style of living, together with his habits of play, soon involved him in debt, and I was now subject to the mortification of seeing him *dunned* again and again, by every tradesman whom he employed. My father had early instilled into my mind a great horror of incurring *debt*; he looked upon it in its true light, as a species of *dishonesty*; 'it was supporting one's self,' he said, 'by levying contributions on others; it was making a show with the price of other people's industry.' Feeling thus sensitive on the subject, you may judge how I suffered from Mr. Ormeston's careless habit in this respect. He denied himself no luxury however costly, no pleasure however expensive, and, when importuned for payment by those who had trusted him, he put them off with fair promises, kind words, or some pleasing little attention, which converted his refusal to satisfy their demands into a compliment.

"The last blow to my happiness at length came. I have lengthened out my story, even as a criminal prolongs the time afforded him to prepare for death, to

defer as long as possible the narration of that final disgrace, the remembrance of which is fraught with mingled bitterness. I cannot enter into a minute detail of the affair; let it suffice to tell you, that a *note* of twenty thousand dollars, drawn by Mr. Ormeston, and bearing, as *endorser*, the name of one of the executors of my father's will, a man of known wealth and respectability, was discounted at a certain bank in New-York, and appropriated by my husband to the payment of a gambling debt. At the expiration of three months, when the note became due, a small sum was paid on account, and a *new note* for the balance was left in the bank; but before the time of payment came round a *second time*, the whole affair was discovered. *The name of the endorser was a forgery!* Do you ask who was the forger? It was he, who had ever been found too weak to resist temptation—even my unhappy husband!

“Let me do him the justice, however, to state that he certainly did not intend to rob either Mr. ——— or the bank. Driven to extremity by immense losses at play, he was induced to this method of raising the money, which he designed to pay *by instalments*, as the note came due; trusting that the gentleman whose name he had used, would know nothing of the transaction, and that, in the course of a year, the whole debt would be gradually cleared off. But some investigations which took place in the bank, led to the unravelment of the whole scheme, and he now stood in the light of a criminal, for, in the judgment of all who heard the disgraceful tale, he was guilty of that which ought to condemn him to a prison. Respect to

the memory of my father, however, and a regard to my feelings, saved him from open shame. Mr. —— agreed to assume the responsibility of the note, and take it out of the bank, upon condition of perfect secrecy being observed respecting the whole affair, while I repaid his kindness, as far as I could, by mortgaging my annuity to him, as a security for his future indemnification. This was the only mode that could be devised for the settlement of the debt, since the terms of the will rendered it impossible to alienate any part of my father's vast fortune from my eldest son. Mr. Ormeston, glad to escape disgrace on any terms, consented to retire into the country, and Mr. —— agreed to pay us, out of my annuity, a thousand dollars per annum, the remainder being retained as a payment on account, of the large sum due him from my husband.

“Such were the conditions upon which we purchased the privilege of hiding our disgrace from the eyes of the world, and gladly did I quit a scene of so much disappointment and sorrow. But life had now lost its brightness for me. From the hour that I learned his guilt, there was no longer the charm of affection to bind me to the unstable principles of the man whom I had chosen to be the companion of my whole existence. There was something so unutterably degrading to me in the thought of *fraud*—it was so mean and despicable a crime—that my proud heart revolted at the very thought. It was not only the want of morality—it was the *grovelling* nature of the act which excited my contempt, and I could no longer love him whom I had learned to despise. I pitied him

from my very soul, I sought to minister to his comfort in every way possible, but I no longer regarded him with the yearning tenderness of a loving heart. He avoided my presence—he seemed to shrink from my look—not because he feared reproach, for God is my witness that no word of bitterness ever passed my lips on the subject; but because he could not brook the eye of one whose unspotted integrity was a daily reproof unto him. I strove to make him content with his altered condition, by sharing it uncomplainingly, though I had been nursed in the lap of indulgence from infancy; but he could not overcome the painful sense of inferiority, which made him quail before me, and we gradually became more and more estranged.

Strange position for two persons so closely connected! Without an unkind word having been exchanged between us—without an angry tone, or a reproachful look to extinguish love, it slowly faded from the hearts of both, like the vague image of a dream. He felt my very life to be a reproach to him. The precepts which I imparted to my children—the maxims of virtue and honor which, as a mother, I was bound to teach and to practice, were like so many stings and arrows to his wounded conscience. My presence was painful to him, for he could not forget that I had looked into the depths of his degraded nature. His habits of *'good fellowship,'* his pleasant manners, his graphic skill in story-telling, his comic songs, made him a great favorite in the little community where we now resided, while the calm tone of subdued sorrow, the reserve, born of betrayed affection, gave to my demeanor a gravity which was mistaken for coldness of heart.

Some keen-sighted gossips had observed, that, when in my presence, Mr. Ormeston's careless and cheerful manner was exchanged for a restlessness, and apparent restraint. He told no merry tales, he entered into no boyish frolics when the sad eye of his wife was upon him, and this was attributed to my unkindness, my severity of temper, which clouded his sunny character. Alas! it was his own consciousness that hushed the song upon his lips, and checked the tide of mirth, when I was by his side. I, alone, knew of his disgrace.

"With regard to my children, I will not deny that I may have committed some errors of judgment, but how little can strangers know of the springs which govern our actions! I was severe in my ideas of discipline—rigid in my sense of duty, and it was with the inflexibility of a judge that I watched over the gradual development of passion and error in the hearts of my children. Why did I do this? Because they were of *his blood*—because I feared that *his* children, while they inherited his beauty and his talents, might also be the heirs of his unstable character. Let the tender affection of those dear, and, God be thanked! those *virtuous* children, prove to you, that, whatever the world might call it, my severity was not unkindness.

"Thus have I explained to you the cause of my apparent parsimony, and the groundlessness of the other charges which have been brought against me by those who cannot look beneath the surface of life. A few years sufficed to pay the debt due to the kind Mr. ———; but others, many others, still remained to be satisfied, and I determined to continue the same course of life, until every farthing was punctually

settled. I endeavored to surround my husband with such objects as might excite the fine powers of his mind, and induce him to substitute intellectual pleasures for the grosser enjoyment of the senses. Books in which he once delighted, painting in which he was not unskilled, music in which he was a proficient, were all brought around him in our humble and quiet home. But the poison of a vitiated taste had pervaded his noble intellect, and all mental pursuits had lost their charm. To ponder on the dangerous pages of Rousseau, or the vain sophisms of Voltaire, was the greatest task he could bring himself to undertake, while his skill as an artist and musician was wasted in political caricatures and political songs. Gradually he sunk lower and lower in the scale of being. He had begun life by *placing his happiness lower than himself*—he had commenced by degrading instead of elevating the dignity of his nature, and he now learned how much easier it is to descend than to regain the upward ascent. You know his subsequent fate: you know that the handsome and intellectual Henry Ormeston—the gifted, the amiable, the good-hearted—he who was once the object of admiration to women, and of imitation to men—sunk into the mere haunter of a village tavern.

“Have I told you enough of my trials? Would you hear how he gradually lost all sense of shame and self-respect? how he found in the depths of vice a *deeper still?* and how he finally died, with that most awful of all the weapons of death—the *drunkard's curse?*”

“Time has shed its healing balm over many sorrows since then, but the lapse of years cannot bring to me forgetfulness. My children are now grown to adoles-

rice—wealth and honor and goodness are theirs, and their love I find my only earthly consolation. But I cannot forget the cruel yet merited sufferings of my youth. I say *merited* because they would never have been upon me had I not '*despised the counsel of my mother.*' I followed the blind impulses of *my own will*; and, like all who *sow the wind, I reaped the whirlwind.*"

MONEY-MAKING ;

OR, SUCCESS NOT ALWAYS HAPPINESS.

"The gods have heard with too indulgent ears."

JUVENAL.

"WHAT is the matter with you, Harry? When I parted with you yesterday, you were in high spirits, anticipating a delightful ride with your favorite friend, Helen Hazlehurst, and regarding every thing in life through a rose-colored medium. Scarcely twenty-four hours have elapsed, and I find you as grave and sad as a world-wearied sage; what new whim has seized you?"

"A single hour, Frank, may suffice for the development of events which color one's whole future life."

"What a philosophic remark! pray how long is it since you turned moralist?"

"Moments often do the work of years, Frank. A sense of our duties and responsibilities usually dawns slowly upon the soul, like the gradual unfolding of daylight to the eye of the sleeper; but sometimes it flashes suddenly and startlingly upon us, even as the lightning, which reveals his hazardous mountain-path to the benighted traveller."

"Upon my word, Harry, you soar an eagle's flight

above my humble comprehension. What has happened to you since yesterday?"

"Much, Frank: enough, in fact, to change all my future plans of life."

"You speak in riddles, my good fellow."

"I am going to quit college, Frank."

"Quit college, Harry! you jest, surely."

"In sober truth, I have decided to relinquish my studies, and try my fortune in the world of traffic."

"Are you mad, Harry, to abandon such a career as lies before you in professional life? and, to come nearer to present prospects, how can you bear to withdraw from the scene of your scholastic labors, after three years of hard study, when the reward of your talents and industry is just within your grasp? You are not—you cannot be serious."

"I knew you would be surprised, Frank; but I have something else to tell you, which will astonish you still more. You know how long I have admired Helen Hazlehurst, and how greatly her intimacy with my sisters has aided me in obtaining an accurate knowledge of her character. She is one of those sweet, gentle creatures, who, though unfitted to dazzle in society, cannot fail to inspire affection in the hearts of those who behold her in the domestic circle. I have long loved her earnestly and tenderly, but scarcely conscious of the strength of my own feelings, I have never spoken to her on the subject until betrayed by circumstance, 'that unspiritual god.' Yesterday, a large party, among whom were Helen and myself, set out to ride, and we were all as merry as youth and healthful excitement could make us. As we entered the woods,

the rest of the gay troop were considerably in advance of us, and while they cantered along the main road, caught the bridle of Helen's horse, and turned into by-path which met the road some two miles beyond. I know not what impulse prompted me to the freak; it was a mere frolic, for I certainly had no idea of the consequences which were to result from it. Some how or other we seemed to grow less mirthful when we found ourselves alone in the greenwood. The sunset hour lent its softening influence to our feelings; we watched the beams of golden light which fell between the gnarled trunks of the old trees, tingling, here and there, a branch with its gorgeous hues, and throwing a rich glow upon the velvet-like turf, until we became silent and almost saddened by overpowering emotion. The quiet of the place, unbroken save by the tramping of our horses, or the whizzing of a bird above our heads—the loveliness of nature in her wildness, and the soft breath of the summer air, all contributed to subdue our hearts. At such a moment, mirth seemed sacrilege. Helen had never looked more beautiful; perhaps her conscious heart lent a deeper flush to her cheek, and a softer sparkle to her eye, for she seemed to grow more and more lovely the longer I gazed upon her sweet face. I know not how it happened, Frank—I was excited—bewildered—but I remember that I gave vehement utterance to the emotions which oppressed me. Those words, which, when heart responds to heart, are never spoken in vain, were breathed into the ear of the agitated girl, and that hour witnessed our betrothal. I cannot describe to you the intoxicating happiness of that moment. It seemed to



me a dream, and yet, as I clasped the hand of the gentle and confiding creature, I felt that it was indeed a blessed reality.

“Nothing could be more unpremeditated than this avowal, and, perhaps you will say, nothing could have been more indiscreet; but when you pass through a similar trial, Frank, you will better understand the force of the temptation. That hour decided my future destiny. I went forth a light-hearted boy, to whom life was, as yet, but a scene of enjoyment and preparation for future struggle: I returned laden with the responsibilities of manhood, for I had taken into my keeping the heart and happiness of a fellow being. I was happy, very happy, Frank—and yet, to you, as to a second conscience, I may disclose the after conflict of my heart. In the deep silence of night, when the voice of passion was stilled, and the language of wisdom made itself heard in my soul, I was conscious that I had committed a great error. What right had I, with my character, as yet, unformed by circumstances, my position in society, as yet, undefined, my fortunes uncertain, my education incomplete—what right had I to assume the voluntary guardianship of a young and innocent girl, whose ignorance of the world placed her entirely under my guidance? Years must elapse before I can claim the hand which she has plighted to me—years of toil for me—of patient suspense for her. My very love has taught me the selfishness of my conduct. In the weary watches of the past night, I have learned—what years are sometimes too short to teach—how fearful are the responsibilities of him who presumes to be his ‘brother’s keeper.’”

"You have committed an act of great indiscretion, Harry, it is true, but I cannot see any reason for such self-reproach; Helen is old enough to judge prudently for herself, and she is fully aware of your pecuniary circumstances."

"Yes, but Helen is one of the most unworldly creatures in existence; she has no idea of poverty or privation, no knowledge of the struggles which must be made by the young and poor American; she would marry me to-morrow if I were to express such a wish, because she relies implicitly upon my judgment, and I will not subject either her or myself to the miseries of a straitened fortune. I must find some short cut to the temple of Plutus—some rapid means of winning gold, and the pleasures of intellectual life must be relinquished for the pursuits of commerce."

"But why not complete your collegiate course before adopting any future vocation?"

"Because I should be obliged to sacrifice a whole year, Frank. No, if I must relinquish my hopes of fame—if I must leave to others the glorious chariot-race, while I wrestle and sweat in the dusty arena, let the strife begin at once."

"If Helen loves you, Harry, she will cheerfully submit to any delay which circumstances may demand, and even share your narrow means, if success should be denied."

"Never would I subject a wife to all the privations which must be the lot of poverty. When I remember the patient toil of my poor mother, her uncomplaining industry, her close economy, nay, the household drudgery to which she submitted during my childhood—when

I remember the keen calculation of expenses necessary in our little family, and the slavish attention to wearisome duties which my father was compelled to give in return for his yearly stipend, I feel that I would rather live and die, a lonely and isolated being, than subject those whom I love to such a life."

"Yet your mother was happy amid all her trials; happy in the affection of her husband—in the welfare of her children—in the consciousness of her own usefulness."

"True, because a woman will submit to every privation more cheerfully than she can to a dearth of affection, but the legacy of my miserly old uncle has materially added to her enjoyments in later life. No, Frank, had I kept watch and ward over my heart, I could have been content to scorn dame Fortune's favors, while my eye was fixed on the glittering wreath of Fame, but now all is changed. I love and am beloved—I have been selfish enough to win what I cannot wear, and I must be content to hide my jewel within my heart until I can show it to the world in a golden setting."

The wisdom of twenty years could offer no arguments sufficiently cogent to overcome the impulses of mistaken feeling. Frank Hargrave was silenced if not convinced, and after many conversations with his friend, resigning all hope of Harry's future companionship, he applied himself with redoubled diligence to the studies which were, to him, the preparation for a professional career. The close of the summer vacation saw him returning to his collegiate duties with renewed zest, while his friend, Harry Eustace, had already de-

voted his energies to commerce, and, chained to a desk in the dingy office of one of our "merchant-princes," was fast acquiring the knowledge of business which is necessary to win a moderate degree of success. It was a weary change to the young aspirant for fortune's favor. Heretofore he had wandered in classic shades, until his soul became filled with images of beauty. To him, the labors of the intellect were as pastime, for he possessed the strength which could wield the powerful weapons of science, as well as the delicate perceptions which seize and enjoy the most minute charms in the moral and physical world. He was a poet, because, in youth, the language of enthusiasm is always poetry, and a scholar, because study had been the very element in which he lived. Now all such things were put aside. His books were laid by for ever, his verses were condemned to the flames, and Harry Eustace was only the active and useful clerk.

Helen Hazlehurst was all that Eustace had described her—a gentle, lovely, and loving creature, full of kindly emotions and innocent thoughts ;—a being to be regarded with tenderness for the very weakness and helplessness of her relying character. Unfit for the glaring sunshine of gay life, and less able to bear the cold blasts of misfortune, she was like some rare exotic, which requires alike a refuge from the storm, and a shelter from the heat, ere its precious perfume repays the care bestowed upon its culture. Her beauty was of that delicate character which seldom outlasts extreme youth. Her pure complexion was so faintly tinted with the rose, her lips were so brilliant

of hue, her teeth so pearly white, and her figure so exceedingly slender in its proportions, that the eye of experience gazed on her with pity as well as admiration ; for of such creatures does consumption choose its most frequent victims. Yet there was so much of the vividness of life in her changeful blush, her sparkling eye, her elastic step, and her lithe form, that one forgot the frailty of her loveliness in its wonderful brightness. Her voice was one of unrivalled melody—its every tone was musical, and her song was like the warble of the forest bird. There was a frankness, too, in her manners, a joyousness in her looks, and a free grace in every gesture, which could only result from the overflowing happiness of an innocent heart. Her unworldliness of character seemed to shed an almost infantine charm around her, and inspired an involuntary respect for the purity which knows no evil, and suspects no guile. But such traits, lovely and feminine as they may be, are rarely combined with strength of mind. Helen was all that men seek in the idol of their earliest youth—all that woman might ever be, if she could be hedged round by defences on all sides, to guard her from disappointment and treachery and sorrow. But alas ! in a world like this, where freshness of feeling, like the dew upon the flower, is exhaled in the very morning of life, or, if still retained, must be hidden from view, like the honey-drop in the blossom's perfumed chalice, something more is required of woman than mere gentleness and timid reliance. Without some latent strength of character, veiled by sweetness and tenderness, woman is but a plaything, a toy, a puppet to amuse the idle hour of listlessness, but utterly

useless in the days of darkness and despondency. "How beautiful it is to love with the *heart* and with the *mind*!" exclaimed the gifted Madame de Stael; and only those who have felt the power of such a love, can fully appreciate the enthusiasm which prompted the remark. Helen Hazlehurst was not calculated to inspire such affection. She possessed all the qualities which are most lovely in childhood, or even in early maidenhood, but which, unless connected with some loftier traits, are apt to degenerate into commonplace feelings in later life.

For two years Harry Eustace continued to fill the station which alone could afford a competent knowledge of his future profession. His days were devoted to business, his evenings to the society of Helen, and, as there were many kind gossips ready to spread abroad the tidings of their engagement, it was soon understood that she was to be left to the exclusive attentions of her lover. The error, so prevalent in society, which induces a girl, as soon as she becomes affianced, to seem utterly unapproachable to all others than her future husband—an error which tends to narrow her mind, and deprive her of one of the most effectual sources of intellectual improvement—was practised to its fullest extent in this case. Every body knew that Helen was engaged, and therefore it became necessary for every body to treat her in a manner differing as much from the familiarity which might be permitted if she were married, as from the attentive politeness which was her due previous to her betrothal. The young lover, immersed in business from morning till night, felt no disposition to mingle in the gayeties of

society, and Helen, happy in the few hours which she daily spent with him, cared little for the pleasures which had formerly attracted her. The life of both had become only a quiet round of monotonous duties and gentle affections, when an event occurred which disturbed the calmness of their feelings, just in time, perhaps, to prevent utter stagnation.

Eustace was not without friends who were both able and willing to assist him in his claims upon fortune ; for it is the way of the world to cheer on a man in the pursuit of wealth, although many a stumbling-block would be thrown in his path if he were seeking the unreal gift of fame. An advantageous offer was made him, which seemed to offer every prospect of success, but it involved the necessity of banishment from his native land. The agency of a factory, and certain facilities for private speculation, awaited him in China, while only the slow accumulations of industry and economy seemed promised him at home. True to his sense of honor and duty, Eustace referred the decision to Helen, and frankly stated all the advantages of a temporary separation, while he described the small chance which was now afforded him of rapid success. He meant not to influence her decision, but, in his attempt at impartial argument, he evinced so plainly his own wishes, that the timid and self-distrusting girl, accustomed to rely implicitly on his judgment, decided against herself. With tears, such as had never before dimmed her bright eyes, she conjured him to do whatever was most for his advantage, and Eustace, impressed with the belief that he should be thus enabled to claim his bride, decided to accept the prof-

ferred good. Full of hope, and exulting in the prospect of a speedy return, he repressed his own sorrowful emotions, and soothed the grief of the devoted Helen. His friend, Frank Hargrave, received the last grasp of his hand ere the ship gave her sails to the wind, and as he stood upon deck, straining his eyes to behold the faint outline of the companion of his early studies, while the remembrance of a gentle and tearful face rose before his mental vision, even the eager gold-seeker felt that wealth might be too dearly bought.

My tale is one of common life ; there are no hairbreadth escapes, no crushing reverses, no overwhelming vicissitudes to disturb the quiet course of human events. In a country like ours, where nearly one half of the members of every large family are induced to look abroad for fortune, these things are of such common occurrence, that perhaps I ought to apologize for offering so commonplace a subject to the attention of my gentle reader. We hear daily of young and enterprising men, abandoning the pleasures of home and friends, and after years of toil, returning to their native land, prosperous, and, as it would seem, happy. . But may I not be pardoned if I venture to lift the golden tissue which rests upon the heart, and show the price at which the rich vestment has been purchased ?

Eustace devoted himself to business with a degree of zeal and perseverance that could not but command success. In the excitement of his daily duties, and the engrossing study of all that could tend to the accomplishment of his designs, he gradually lost much of his poignant regret. His whole soul became absorbed in

the acquisition of wealth, and his ideas of a competent fortune became so expanded, that the goal of his hopes seemed to fleet further on, the more rapidly he sped towards it. His letters to Helen were full of affection, and many a fantastic token of remembrance, carved with the wonderful skill of the singular people among whom he sojourned, came over the wide waste of waters, to cheer the lonely girl. But alas ! it was with them as with all others—

“ The fondest thoughts two hearts can cherish,
When each is lonely doomed to weep,
Are fruits in desert isles that perish,
Or treasures buried in the deep.”

Many a tender thought, many a gentle fancy, which, if uttered in the ear of affection, would have been as the sweet voice of an angel, softening the heart which life's cares were indurating, and cheering the bosom which solitude was gradually darkening, was necessarily lost in the distance which separated the lovers. Months elapsed between the writing and the reading of the precious letters which were like winged messengers of love across the trackless ocean. Gradually, imperceptibly, unconsciously, there was a change in the style of those letters. Still tender and affectionate, they had lost much of the romantic fervor of early youth. Eustace learned to mingle tidings of the strange world in which he lived, with the outpourings of that love that once overflowed the limits of a single epistle. He wrote, calmly, quietly, tenderly as one might address the wife of his bosom, the partner of his cares as well as his joys ; while poor Helen's letters were mere

transcripts of her monotonous life and its paralyzing effect upon her concentrated feelings. Shut up in the seclusion of domestic life, surrounded by persons, who, whatever might be their creed as to the "chief end of man," believed most religiously that the chief end of woman was to understand the mysteries of house-cleaning, manage servants, and make shirts, Helen made a merit of excluding all amusements, and devoting herself solely to those peculiarly feminine duties, which she had been led to consider paramount in a wife. Of the development of mind and character which enables a wife to contribute so much more largely to a husband's happiness, while it fits her still better for the minor duties of life, poor Helen was utterly ignorant. An adept in every variety of needle-work, thoroughly versed in every department of housekeeping, exhibiting the most elaborate skill in the labors of the *cuisine*, and a perfect model of economy and notability, she was considered by her family a very pattern for good wives. And so she was, as far as such accomplishments go towards forming that most desirable of earthly blessings. But essential as these things are, there are other qualities quite as necessary to the attainment of that perfect unity of feeling which can alone secure domestic happiness. While the husband devotes his chief attention to active life, and the wife gives her time and thoughts to the thousand minute cares which make up the sum of household duties, there should be some spot of neutral ground where both may meet,—some green and shady nook, as remote from the turmoil of the world of business, as it is from the monotonous hum of the ceaseless wheels which

control the machinery of housekeeping. There should be other and loftier subjects of conversation between them than consultations about the next day's dinner, or discussions about the last weekly bill. A woman's mind should be trained to those liberal views which enable her to understand and appreciate her husband's pursuits, even when she does not seek to share them. The field of intellect should not be suffered to lie fallow : if the soil be thin and poor, it will at least yield a growth of fragrant flowers to charm the weary eye ; and if it be capable of producing not only the perishing blossom, but also the rich fruits of wisdom, how greatly is the happiness as well as the usefulness of both increased. Helen had no such ideas, however. For her, life had but one aim and but one hope ; by close attention to womanly duties she was accomplishing the first, and the return of her lover would fulfil the second.

Year after year elapsed, and still Eustace was accumulating wealth. Avarice is like jealousy, 'it grows by what it feeds on.' How could he feel he had enough when every season was adding to his hoard ? How desist from gathering the golden fruitage which fell at his very feet ? Twelve years of unremitting labor had made him the possessor of an enormous fortune, and at length he became wearied even to satiety, ere he determined to seek his native land. In the course of his preparations for his return, many early associations were reviewed, old friends were remembered with something like former affection, and tokens of regard were carefully treasured up, to be presented to many an early associate whose image had nearly faded from his recollection. His wealth was gradually transferred

to America, and converting the overplus of his immense investments into silver plate, which was doubled in value by the delicate and skilful workmanship of the Chinese, Eustace embarked for America.

* * * * *

Late one afternoon, about a month after his arrival in New-York, Eustace was seated alone in his apartment. Wealth can accomplish wonders, and the rich merchant was already installed in a splendidly furnished house, which only wanted a mistress to perfect its arrangements. Every thing around him was costly and magnificent. The looms of Persia had furnished the velvet-like carpets in which the foot buried itself at every step,—the delicate tissues of India shaded the open casements,—the exquisite embroidery of the Celestial Empire lay like jewels on each cushioned chair, or converted each luxurious couch into a bed of flowers which might have deceived even Nature's self. Tall vases of silver filligree stood in the corners, filled with some strange and delicious perfume and diffusing a subtle odor through the apartments,—plants of rare beauty bloomed in those delicate jars to which China has given her own ancient name,—nondescript images, of silver and gold, and precious porcelain,—cups as delicate as a fairy chalice, and worth a prince's ransom for their fragile beauty,—were gathered in rich profusion in those orientalized apartments; while Chinese servants, clad in silk, and wearing slippers of the softest felt, glided noiselessly about, like shadows in a dream. Yet Eustace sat amid all this splendor, in silence, and, as it seemed, in sadness. A cloud was

pon his brow, and the unquiet drooping of his eyelid told of many a melancholy thought.

Suddenly the door opened, and a pale, intellectual looking man, with the stooping shoulders and slender figure of an habitual student, entered the room. He paused a moment at the threshold, and the next instant the hands of both were interlocked in the warm grasp of unforgotten friendship. "Frank!" "Harry!" burst spontaneously from the lips of each, and a tear, welling up from the depths of a noble heart, moistened the eyes of both.

"I have been all impatience to see you since I first heard of your arrival, Harry," said Hargrave, "but I could not get away from business; and as I should have been ruined in the opinion of my matter-of-fact neighbors, had I come to New-York only to see an old friend, I was glad to trump up some old and neglected concern as an excuse."

"Do you still live in the little village, Frank, where you took up your abode soon after completing your law-studies?"

"The *little* village! bless your heart, Harry, nothing remains little in this country; our village is now an incorporated city, and I have the honor to be its chief magistrate. Ha! ha! only think of Frank Hargrave, the mayor—"

"And you are married too, Frank?"

"Yes, I have one of the best of wives, and two as pretty and promising little ones as one could wish to see."

"Then I suppose you have made a fortune too?"

"No, no, Harry, fortunes do not grow here as fast as

they do in tropical countries. I own a farm whose produce suffices for the support of my family, and my profession brings me an income of from twelve to fifteen hundred dollars per annum. I do not count my salary as mayor, for that is all consumed in the extra expenses attendant upon the office,—‘the honor, the honor, Hal,’ is all that political rank affords in an economical republic. I am enabled to lay aside something every year towards the support of my old age, but riches I never expect to obtain. My whole estate would scarcely pay for such a thing as that,” and Hargrave pointed, as he spoke, to the superb silver table which stood beside his friend, strewn with costly Indian toys.

“You have come just in time, Frank,” said Eustace, after a pause, “this is my wedding day,—I am to be married this evening.”

“Ah, I am truly glad of it; poor Helen! she has waited long for you, Harry; her youth and beauty have faded, and yet, now that I look more closely at you, she is not more changed than yourself. What a bronzed and weather-beaten face you have brought back; you are more than half a China-man.”

Eustace sighed heavily.

“Nay, do not sigh about it, Harry; I dare say you are as handsome as ever in the eyes of Helen.”

“Poor, poor Helen!” said Eustace, despondingly.

“Rather say *rich* Helen,” cried Frank, gayly, “why, man, you have more gold and silver in this very room than we Yankees are accustomed to handle in a lifetime.”

“Yet would I give all my hard-earned wealth, Frank, for the gifts which you possess.”

“What are they, pray?”

“Your freshness of feeling, the earnestness of purpose, the enthusiasm of character which makes you still as ardent as a boy, while I am a care-worn and world-weary man.”

“What do you mean, Harry? You have realized every hope,—you have gained a princely fortune, and are now upon the point of wedding the object of your first love ;—what more can be wanting to your happiness?”

“*The capacity for enjoyment, without which all else is valueless.* I have wasted my glad youth in toil, thankless, unshared toil,—I have denied myself the enjoyments of social life,—shut up my better feelings within my own bosom,—made even love my slave, rather than my master, and by the force of an indomitable will have won all that I fancied necessary to happiness. But I forgot to calculate the changes of years and circumstances. I did not think that the rolling wheels of time which were scattering golden sands as they flashed past me in my foreign abode, were crushing the simple flowers of life which bloomed in my native woodland home. I return to claim my bright and beautiful Helen, and I find but a spectre of the past,—a pale, spiritless, sad-eyed creature, whose every feeling is centred in a blind devotion to me,—whose mind is as childlike as in the days of her girlish beauty and simplicity, while her person is blighted by premature age,—whose very guilelessness, so lovely in her extreme youth, now wears the semblance of weakness,—whose only charm now consists in her undying love. Alas! alas! the perfume of the faded rose alone remains, and my future

life must be spent in a vain attempt to cherish the perishing flower."

"Good Heavens! Eustace, with such feelings why do you marry Helen?"

"Why do I marry? Can you ask such a question, Frank? should I not be a monster if I hesitated when the path of duty is so plain? Who condemned her young years to the blight of loneliness and hope deferred? For whose sake was the sweetness of that fair flower wasted? While she lives she shall be watched over with all the tenderness of remorseful love, hut she will die, Frank,—even now the seeds of disease are sown, and I know that she will die;—yet instead of being agonized at the very thought of such a catastrophe, I can talk of it calmly, and without one thrill of the anguish which in earlier days would have rent my very heart-strings. Am I not then changed? I tell you, man, *my capacities for love and happiness are dead within me*. Even as they who delve the mine lose their physical vigor and become old ere they reach their prime, so have my feelings become blighted and blasted by the poisonous atmosphere of gold. My locks are still unbleached, but *my heart is gray*. The necessity of loving no longer exists;—I am past all enjoyment of heart and mind. The excitement of money-making, like that of gambling, unfits the mind for quiet pleasures; my books, to which I thought I should return with new zest, are utterly distasteful to me,—I can never again be the abstracted and imaginative student. My early love, which in all my wanderings was like the star of hope, now gleams dimly and faintly through the mists of years,—I can be the kind

husband, but never again the passionate lover. To exhibit my wealth to admiring and envious eyes,—to live amid luxuries which I despise, although habit has made them necessary to my comfort,—to watch with regretful tenderness over the fading away of the only creature who loves me, while remorse is ever in my heart, because of my own inert affections,—such is my future destiny. You pity me, Frank,—oh! may you never know the pang of *self-pity*,—the compassion for one's own self, which now stirs within my bosom when I behold around me so many means of enjoyment, and feel myself so incapable of appreciating them. I have made gold my idol, and verily I have my reward."

"You judge too hastily of yourself, Harry; had you remained at home the same changes might have occurred in Helen, and the same length of time might have elapsed ere you could marry."

"No, no, Frank, I cannot deceive myself with any such sophistry. Had I been here to watch over her failing health, to guide her gentle mind, to develope her latent qualities, to assimilate her to myself,—we should now be happy, for I should never then have learned how unsuited were our characters. Do you remember the story of the blind man who had been accustomed to consider his wife beautiful, because her voice was one of extreme sweetness, and who, when restored to sight, felt more grief at the loss of that dear delusion, than joy at the acquisition of all the other blessings of light? Such is my fate; my love has been like the lamp enclosed in an antique sepulchre, burning clear and undimmed while shut up within my own bo-

som, but dying out into a feeble glimmer beneath the glare of open day."

Rarely do the predictions of sorrow fail. Helen became the bride of the wealthy and honored merchant, while not one shadow of distrust rested upon the pure current of her faithful affection. Throned like an idol amid the countless luxuries which a lavish tenderness gathered around her, she was happy in her undoubting faith, happy in her husband's gentle care, happy in the realization of her life-long dream of hope. Yet the forebodings of Eustace were fulfilled. Consumption had set its mark upon her, and gradually did she fade from the sight of those who loved her. She lived long enough to awaken a degree of pitying tenderness in the bosom of her husband, which was in fact love, but love with all its griefs and none of its delights. And then,—when his very watchfulness over her welfare had become a *necessity* to the morbid and disappointed Eustace,—she closed her blameless life in quiet happiness.

"She has left me," he wrote to his friend Hargrave,—"she has left me; I am now a lonely and unloved being,—solitary amid my fellows, without either joy or hope in the world. My wealth is a positive curse to me, since it removes from me the necessity of exertion, which could alone divert my incurable melancholy. We are like the brothers in the beautiful Eastern Apologue, Frank: I have wasted the best years of my life in a vain search after the phantom Peace, while you have found the gentle goddess seated at your threshold. God grant that she may ever abide with you."

THE MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

"HE that sits above
In his calm glory, will forgive the love
His creatures bear each other, e'en if blent
With a vain worship."

MRS. HEMANS.

"ABOUT ten years ago," said my friend, Mrs. B——, "my physicians having recommended a long sea-voyage as the most probable cure for an attack of bronchitis, my husband, who was then engaged in mercantile pursuits, fitted up a ship which he was about freighting for Calcutta, and resolved to accompany me to India. If I were to relate all my impressions during my absence, I might fill a volume, but I will content myself with narrating a single incident which occurred on our return, and which has impressed itself on my memory too deeply to be effaced by the finger of time. When we arrived at Calcutta, my health was quite restored, and we therefore made but little delay there, as I was anxious to return to my mother, whose advanced age had forbidden her to become my companion. My husband soon disposed of the valuable cargo he had brought out, and a homeward freight having been procured, we prepared to leave Calcutta. The day before the ship was to sail, a gentleman, who announced himself as an American missionary, waited upon Mr. B.,

with a request that a passage might be afforded to his wife and child. As the cabin was not large, and had been appropriated solely to my use, my husband hesitated to reply till I should have been consulted, and therefore requested the gentleman to call at our abode in the afternoon. As soon as I heard of the application, however, I begged that they might be informed of my willingness to accommodate them, and I felt no small degree of pleasure in the thought of having a female companion during our long and tedious voyage.

“Early in the evening of the same day, he called on me with his wife, to express their thanks. I was exceedingly struck with the great contrast that existed between the two. The missionary was a tall, gaunt man, of some fifty years of age, with a countenance as inflexible as if moulded in iron; his hair was quite white, but thick and wiry, bristling up from his deeply-furrowed forehead as if to contrast still more strongly with his bronzed complexion. His manners were cold and stern, and when I looked on him I was involuntarily reminded of one of the blasted pine-trees—‘wrecks of a single winter,’ which sometimes rear their blighted heads amid the bright scenery of our beautiful country. His wife was one of the most delicate women, in appearance, that I have ever seen. Her age seemed not to exceed twenty years; indeed, her diminutive figure and innocent countenance, made her seem even younger. Her manner was characterized by timid gentleness, and I soon saw that she looked up to her husband with a feeling of awe, almost approaching to fear. His mode of addressing her was cold, almost rude, and her submissive meekness seemed quite unnoticed, certainly un-

appreciated. Our interview was not a long one, and when we parted, I could not help wondering how the surface could ever appear so indurate where the genial warmth of gospel truth had penetrated the soil of the heart.

"The next morning I was early on board the ship, and we only waited the arrival of our new passengers to set sail. They came at length, bringing with them a pale but bright-eyed child, about four years of age. The missionary silently superintended the little arrangements necessary to their comfort, and, to my watchful eye, seemed anxiously striving to preserve the stoicism which he, perhaps, deemed a duty. He scarcely approached his weeping wife, and seemed as if about to return to the shore without exchanging a syllable with her, when she suddenly sprang forward as if to throw herself on his bosom. Whether her habitual awe overcame her, I know not, but, before she reached his arms, she fell at his feet on the deck. The frame of the strong man shook with suppressed emotion as he bent and raised her to his breast. 'God bless you, Ellen,' said he, 'God bless you, and may He forgive me this bitter regret!' She raised her head and looked at him with a bewildered expression, as if she doubted whether she understood him, but the moment of softness passed away: he loosed his clasp of her slender form, and scarcely touching his lips to her forehead, turned towards his child. A second time I saw an indefinable expression of mingled anguish and remorse pass over his face, as if he reproached himself for the strength of his own affections, but the love of the father overcame him, and bending on one knee beside the child, he bu-

ried his face in her bright curls, and wept like an infant. It was a fearful thing to see that iron frame shaken with sobs, and that stern countenance bowed before the weakness of a babe. A few brief moments passed, and ere the spectators of the scene could dash the tear-drops from their eyes, the missionary's boat was cutting the waves towards the shore. He never turned his head towards the ship, and though we could observe the oarsmen directing his attention to our waving handkerchiefs, he remained immovable.

"For several days Mrs. Warrender remained in her berth, too ill and too much depressed in spirits to be our companion. But her little girl, delighted with the novelty of her situation, was not to be restrained by her mother's illness. She soon crept to my side, and I welcomed her with sufficient warmth to induce her to repeat her visit, so that by the time Mrs. Warrender made her appearance in the cabin, I had already secured a fast friend in the little Lydia. She was a child of very lovely character. Ardent and impetuous in all her feelings, she had the affectionate disposition which always belongs to such a temperament. To harsh reproof, she was unmovably haughty and inflexible, but to kind remonstrance, she was as yielding and submissive as a lamb. Possessed of great intelligence and extreme personal beauty, she soon became a general favorite. Every one in the ship loved her, and it was pleasant to notice the softened voice and merry smile with which the rudest sailor would take her on his knee and tell her a droll story, or sing her a nautical ballad. She had a remarkably happy temper; nothing seemed to fret her; life was perpetual summer to her, because

her sunshine was the reflection of a pure and happy spirit.

"Mrs. Warrender was, as I soon found, seriously ill. Her cough was very severe, and my own opinion was, that consumption had already marked her for the grave. I was too much interested in her to remain long a stranger, and her gentle nature soon acknowledged the claims of kindness. She was one of those timid creatures who constantly require a support. She seemed to want some firmer character on which to depend; some one who might draw forth her confidence, and repay it with sympathy. Had she been called to mingle much in society, this very peculiarity might have made her indiscreet, but in her present circumstances, it only added to the graceful tenderness of her manner. It was not long before she confided to me her simple story. Many of the details, however, which enabled me fully to comprehend her history, I learned in after times, from a member of her own family. These I shall combine in one connected sketch, so as to enable you to understand at once that which it cost me many weeks to decipher.

"Ellen Talbot was the daughter of one who was enthusiastically devoted to the missionary cause. He had frequently expressed his regret that his conviction of the importance of the cause had come so late in life that his duties as a husband and father forbade him to take up the Cross and travel into the wastes of Heathen darkness. From her earliest childhood, Ellen had been accustomed to hear her father avow his determination to educate his sons for missionaries, and his daughters for wives to such heralds of the gospel. She had

learned to think that such was her vocation, long before girls usually form plans for futurity, and the romance which belongs in a greater or less degree to the character of every woman, in her, assumed the flattering guise of self-devotedness. Her piety was sincere, her faith undoubting, but she gave herself up to a life of hardship with the same kind of feeling which, in other lands, induces the followers of another creed to sacrifice themselves to the cloister. Hers was not a clear conviction of duty, such as should alone influence the missionary to set himself to his great task. It was a fervid dream of romantic self-devotion; a girlish zeal to make a great sacrifice of personal advantages.

“Far be it from me to rebuke the pious fervor of the missionary. The woman who, strong in the conviction of duty, and relying on the promise that, ‘as her day is, so shall her strength be,’ abandons the refinements of civilized society and the endearments of home, to traverse the desert in the cause of Christ, is indeed a ‘light set on a hill which cannot be hid.’ If ever the nations of the earth are to be gathered into one fold—if ever the islands of the far seas are to sing the praises of Redeeming love, it will be through the influence of the weaker no less than the harder sex. The arm of man may wield the lightnings of gospel truth—the tongue of man utter the thunders of gospel eloquence, but it is the hand of woman which must drop the manna of Christian charity over the trackless wilderness of Heathenism. Yet she must not be led forward by the ignis fatuus of a romantic temper—a will o’ the wisp, engendered by the vapors of a heated imagination. She must be urged to her high task by a

clear sense of duty,—Religion must be the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, to guide her steps,—she must have fortitude to suffer, as well as energy to act; and above all, her dependence must be not upon an arm of flesh, but upon the God of her fathers, whose work she has undertaken to do.

“Such was not the case with Ellen Talbot. Sincere, but misjudging, her home seemed to her quite too limited a sphere, and measuring her duties rather by her zeal than her capacities, she forgot that God never placed mortals in a field so narrow that it may not be sown with good seed and give back a rich harvest.

“She was about sixteen when she first met with Mr. Warrender. Her father’s well-known piety rendered his house a favorite resort for Christians of all denominations, especially those engaged in missions, and among others, Mr. Warrender came to spend a few weeks with him, previous to departing for India. He was a widower, of perhaps forty-five years of age, cold, stately, even stern in his manner, and ascetic in all his habits. He was well aware of the need of woman’s gentle ministry to aid him in his toilsome task, and Ellen’s zeal in the cause, her gentleness of deportment, and her extreme youth, which he deemed would enable her to acquire the language of the country with great facility, were his inducements to select her. Of mere earthly affection he did not dream. His heart, like the lava of Vesuvius, had hardened over the ashes of his early love, and no second city of the affections could ever now arise upon the indurated soil.

"In youth, he had possessed very strong passions, and his whole life had been a struggle between right and wrong. At an early age he had formed an attachment to a lady several years his senior, and this passion soon swallowed up all the rest. Yet, even the sweetest founts of tenderness became, in his bosom, like the bitter waters of Marah. The object of his affection, a high-minded, noble-hearted woman, had sacrificed all her worldly prospects to wed the humble missionary, and in the endeavor to repay her for such love, he gave his heart up to the most idolatrous worship of her. 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me,' was the awful command upon Mount Sinai, and fearfully was the denunciation against idolatry brought home to the unhappy man. After eight years of wedded happiness, and partially successful labors among the western Indians, he one day returned from a visit of duty into the interior of the country, only to find his log cabin a heap of ruins, and to rake from its smouldering ashes the bones of his wife and little ones. A brother missionary had accompanied him on his return, and through his care, Mr. Warrender was brought back to civilized life, but many months elapsed after this dreadful calamity, ere his mind recovered its healthy tone. When he re-appeared to resume his missionary labors, every one noticed the change that had taken place in him. From an ardent, impetuous, affectionate pleader with souls, he had now become cold in manner, rigid in principle, severe in admonition, and apparently, unmoved by the ordinary affections of humanity.

"Such was the husband of the timid, sensitive girl,

who had lived but in the atmosphere of kindness, and who was now to wither like a delicate exotic transplanted to a wintry clime. It is strange to observe how different are the results which a vivifying sense of religion produces in different hearts. If I might compare the internal with the external world, I should say it is like a tropical sun, in some places softening the soil and bringing forth fruit and flowers in rich profusion, while in others, it hardens the rock even while it is maturing the rich gems which lie within earth's bosom. Ellen's religion was one of love, her husband's seemed more allied to fear. To her, the enjoyment of God's gifts seemed an acceptable homage to His bounty,—to her husband, it seemed a species of sacrilege. In her innocent gladness of temper, she looked upon this world as a scene of probation, where earth's pleasures were to be proved no less than its sufferings,—while he regarded it as a place cursed for the disobedience of man, whose delights were as so many poisonous plants, deadly to the soul. The tenderness which he felt growing up in his heart towards his wife and daughter, startled him from his fancied security against earthly enjoyments, and he spent many an hour wrestling with the new temptation which he felt to be assailing him, lest the curse of idolatry should again wither his gourd.

“Mr. Warrender had met with all the success which could reasonably have been expected. The field of his labors required careful and diligent culture, while he too often found the tares springing up to choke the good seed. His wife ministered to the bodily necessities of the suffering and destitute, but her courage failed, and the spirit of self-distrust and doubt took

possession of her when she sought to enlighten their benighted minds. She was a kind, tender and loving woman, but she lacked the strong intellect, the moral courage, and the firm faith of the missionary. The consciousness that she had overrated her powers—the thought that she was occupying a place which others might fill far more worthily, and the total want of sympathy or support in her husband, all contributed to depress her spirits and undermine her health. All the tenderness of her nature became centred in her child, and when that darling little one began to droop beneath the sultry clime, the mother's terrors overpowered all other feelings. She knew that she had not the faith which supported the high-hearted Mrs. Judson, when after laying her only child in its solitary grave, she uttered those sublime and thrilling words, 'God grant that the sacrifice may not have been made in vain.' How many a heart has responded to those words when in sorrow and bereavement it pondered over the remembrance of the lovely and the lost!

"While we were yet in the warm latitudes, we were becalmed for nearly a week. The sky was like burnished copper, and the sea like molten brass. Not a breeze stirred, not a ripple moved on the face of the waters; all was one breathless calm. We dared not venture on deck during the day, for the rays of the sun were absolutely scorching, and when night came on, the languor and oppression which we suffered, scarcely allowed us to benefit by its freshness. One day, little Lydia, who felt the restraint of confinement to the cabin more than any of us, contrived to slip away from us unperceived. Her mother, who was lying in her

berth, exhausted with the intense heat, supposed the child was with me, and I thought she was asleep beside her mother. She was absent perhaps an hour, when the mate entered the cabin bearing her in his arms. She had stole upon deck, and after vainly endeavoring to rouse Cato, the dog, to a game of romp, had lain down beside him and dropped asleep. She had not been long there when she was discovered ; but she had slept beneath that burning sun, and her flushed cheek showed its fearful power.

“From that hour the sweet child never held up her head. She had received what the sailors call a sun-stroke. For a long time her mother seemed unable to realize the extent of her danger, though she sat beside her, moistening her parched lips and listening to her incoherent murmuring. But I shall never forget the moment when she was first made aware of the threatened blow. I shall never forget the look of wild despair—her cry of agony, and the sudden bending of her knee while she uttered a brief but solemn prayer. From that moment she relinquished all hope, and with a countenance calm but ever stained with tears, she bent over the fair creature’s couch. ‘I will not murmur, but I may surely weep,’ she replied, to my attempts at consolation.

“For three days the little girl lay almost insensible ; on the evening of the fourth she awoke to perfect consciousness ; a prelude, as I knew too well of coming death. ‘Mother, why do you cry ?’ said she, as she looked up into her face.

“‘Because I fear you are going to leave me, darling,’ said the mother, suppressing her emotion.

•

“ ‘I would cry, too, if you were to leave me, mother,’ said the child.

“ ‘But, dearest,’ said Mrs. Warrender, ‘if you leave me you will go to Heaven,’ and she said this to discover whether she was aware of her situation.

“ ‘I know it, mother, but I want you to go with me.’

“ ‘Surely you are not afraid to go to that beautiful place, my sweet Lydia.’

“ ‘No, dear mother, not afraid, but I shall want you in Heaven with me,’ was the reply of the dying child.

“ Mrs. Warrender looked towards me with an expression I shall never forget, then imprinting a kiss upon the fair child’s brow, and motioning me to take her place by the bed-side, she rose and left us for a few minutes. When she returned she was calm, but a deadly pallor had settled upon her face which never again left it. Two hours after the child had uttered those few words so thrilling to a mother’s heart, her pure spirit had departed.

“ Mrs. Warrender’s physical strength was unequal to the fearful struggle of feeling. She was conveyed to bed insensible, and a succession of fainting-fits seemed to threaten the most alarming results. But towards evening she recovered sufficiently to rise, and taking her seat beside the body, never again left it till the last sad offices were performed. The intense heat of the weather rendered it necessary to bury the dead as early as possible on the following morning. Attired in one of her little night-dresses, with a simple cap only half concealing her bright curls, Lydia looked as

if she had only lain down to sleep. Never, never did death wear a lovelier aspect. But when we assembled on deck just before sunrise, the beautiful child lay in her coarse shroud, and her sweet face no longer visible to our mournful gaze.

“I will not describe to you the solemnity of a funeral at sea. You have heard its details often before now, and this differed from others only in the peculiar interest which had been excited by the little creature who now lay stiff and cold before us. The mother leaned upon me while my husband read the beautiful service for the dead ; her gaze was fixed upon the body as if her eyes could pierce the rude envelope which concealed her treasure from her view. But when the sailors, brushing a tear from their rough cheeks, raised the grating, every heart sunk as the sudden plash of the water struck upon the ear ; and the wretched mother, uttering a piercing cry, sunk upon her knees. We bore her to her berth, and she never again quitted it till we arrived at New-York. A breeze sprang up about an hour after the child’s body had been consigned to the pitiless waters, and we were spared the pain of feeling ourselves moored above the grave.

“My whole time was now devoted to the suffering mother. She was evidently sinking fast, and I could not help attributing her resignation to her consciousness of the approach of death. I once spoke to her of it, and her reply was very impressive :—‘ When I first learned my child’s danger, I prayed, that if it were consistent with the will of Providence, she might be spared to me. When I found that God had decreed

my darling should be taken from me, I made a solemn contract, in my own heart, that if she were saved from the physical bitterness of death, I would never murmur, however I might weep. She died as gently as a rose falls from its stem, and I dare not fail in my promise to my Maker. He has mercifully given me strength, by affording me the hope of soon rejoining her in Heaven. Her last words are never absent from my thoughts, and I cannot help mingling earthly feelings with my aspirations after a better world. I picture to myself her little hands extended to clasp the mother, who so long delays to meet her, and the hour of death will be to me more welcome than the hour that gave her birth.'

"It was a strange, but beautiful fancy, which thus led the mother to feel that she held communion in thought with her lost darling. It may be, that some will censure this blending of earthly affections with heavenly hopes; but she who has ever wept above the bier of a beloved one, will have charity for this weakness. If there be any thing which can make the hope of Heaven dear to the worldly-minded, it is the belief that it is peopled by the heart's lost treasures. The vanity of self-knowledge—the pride of life—the pomps of the world—may all work together to make us indifferent, in the heyday of life, to the vague ideas of a Heaven of bliss, but let the affections be once fastened there, as to the abode of a God of Love, and the home of our dearest objects of tenderness, and it becomes the haven of our every hope.

"When the ship arrived at New-York, Mrs. Warrender was too ill to reach her father's house, which

was about two miles distant from the city. She was removed to our house, which had been for several weeks prepared for our reception ; and there, surrounded by her family, who had been summoned to her sick bed, she spent the few remaining days of her life. She expressed a wish to be buried in her native village. ‘My mother lies there,’ said she, ‘and methinks I should like to rest beneath the same sod.’ Tears came in her eyes as she spoke, and I knew she was thinking of the moaning waves where her daughter’s little form reposed.

“In the little churchyard of N——, is a modest tomb of white marble, bearing the name of ‘Ellen Warrender, aged 21 years ;’ and the moss-pinks, which her own hands planted on her mother’s grave, are fast spreading themselves over her own.”

THE VILLAGE BRIDE.

———"Estrange her once, it boots not how,
By wrong, doubts, falsehood—any thing that tells
A change has come upon your tenderness,
And there is not a high thing out of heaven
Her pride o'ermastereth not."

WILLIS.

"CONGRATULATE me, Ormesby, I have at last found the object of my life-long search ; I am going to be married."

"I do congratulate you, with all my heart, my dear Frankfort," returned his friend, "for if your experience of wedded life should equal mine, your only regret will be that you have so long deferred the period of its enjoyment."

"Ah, if I had been situated as you are, Ormesby, I should have married long ago."

"Do you mean to say that if you had been a young physician, struggling against the storms of fortune, you would have shared your poverty with a wife ; when as the heir of a rich merchant you have shunned marriage as if it had been a pestilence ?"

"Yes, for had I been poor I should have been sure of meeting with disinterested affection."

"I have often wondered," said Ormesby, "how it was possible for you to be so distrustful of yourself, and so destitute of all faith in woman."

"The reason of my self-distrust is too evident to need explanation," said Frankfort, smiling bitterly, as he glanced towards the mirror which reflected his intelligent but not handsome countenance; "mine is not a face that 'limners love to paint, and ladies to look upon;' and I value not the 'golden opinions' which my wealth can buy."

"You do yourself injustice, Frankfort; with your gifted mind and high-toned feelings, you might easily win the love of woman, despite your swarthy brow which you just now regarded with so much scorn. For my own part, I do not believe that beauty is the most powerful of all spells over the affections. It has a magic power of *attraction*, but it requires the aid of some more enduring charm before it can *retain* the love it awakens."

"You know but little of woman's nature, Ormesby, a smooth cheek, a bright eye, a rosy lip, would win her from her allegiance to an angel. I have seen too much of society to be in doubt as to my own position in it. I can fully appreciate the civilities of ambitious mothers, and the allurements of fashionable daughters, for I well know that girls, educated according to the modern system, would not hesitate to marry 'le Diable boiteux,' if he had my broad lands for his heritage."

"Why you have grown as suspicious as an old miser, Frankfort; you can surely have had no cause to harbor such evil fancies."

"Have I not, Ormesby?" said Frankfort, in the low tone of suppressed indignation; "listen to the tale of my experience in woman's faith. In the days of my early youth, I met with the beautiful Emily B——, the only

child of a fashionable but dowerless widow. The charms of her person were enhanced by the frank and artless manners which suited so well with the almost childlike delicacy of her features and complexion. I loved her with all the fervor of boyish affection, and was fool enough to fancy that my feelings were reciprocated. I offered her my hand, was accepted, and only waited until I should become of age to take possession of my estate, and to claim my beautiful bride. There wanted but one week of the long anticipated time, when I learned on what a precipice I stood. Before she knew me, Emily had plighted her faith to a young officer in the navy, and it was his prolonged absence in the Mediterranean, which had afforded her the opportunity of making a wealthier alliance. A letter from the indignant lover gave me the first intimation of her falsehood, and with it he sent a packet of letters, received from her during the first months of my acquaintance with her, in which allusions the most degrading and insulting were made to me ; my personal defects were depicted in the most glaring colors, my devotedness was unsparingly ridiculed, my boyish passion derided, and sentiments of the most unchanging affection were expressed towards her absent lover. Then came others of a later date, hinting of maternal influence and poverty, and the necessity of keeping up an appearance in society. Finally, the correspondence was closed by a short and cold billet, bearing date long after she had consented to become my wife, and containing sundry good and cogent reasons why my birthright of fertile acres should be preferred to the heritage of him who was destined to plough the barren waves. I enclosed

the packet in an envelope to Emily, and adding a note which simply stated that my reasons for declining the honor of her alliance were fully explained in the letters, I bade her farewell for ever. So ended my dream of woman's faith. Emily afterwards found a third fool on whom to practise her arts, and is now, I am told, an exemplary wife and mother. *Exemplary*, forsooth! her outset in life was one series of falsehoods, yet is she now, to outward seeming, a model of propriety. Such is *my* experience, Ormesby; can you wonder that I am somewhat slow of belief now?"

"But is it just, Frankfort, to condemn the whole sex for the faults of one deceitful woman? It is not in fashionable society that one must look for perfect integrity of character. The conventional forms prescribed by etiquette are so full of deception, and there is so much petty hypocrisy constantly practised in the intercourse of daily life, that the snow-white purity of truth is soon sullied, if not destroyed."

"I am aware of that, Ormesby, and therefore it is that I have fled from the gay world, choosing rather to seek my wife amid the shades of rural life."

"And pray where did you find the paragon, who alone could satisfy your fastidious taste?"

"I may as well follow the advice given in the French fairy tale, and *commence at the commencement*. You know it is now two years since I returned from my long sojourn on the continent, but you cannot imagine with what weariness I had long looked upon all the allurements usually offered to travellers abroad. My eye was completely sated with pictures and statues, palaces and cathedrals—I was annoyed by the perpetual

presence of '*gens d'armirie*,' disgusted with the filth and coarseness of the 'most refined nation in the world,' and tired of the frivolities and vices of the great capitals of Europe. I longed once more to breathe the free air of my native land; and as soon as I set foot upon the shores of America, I commenced a tour of the United States. After a year's sojourn amid all kinds of people and every variety of scenery, I was returning to my long forsaken home, when a droll incident befell me, while passing through New Hampshire.

"I had left my servant and carriage at the town of —, and with a small valise, a fishing-case and a few books, turned off from the high road to the pretty village of Merrivale, where, I had learned, I should find excellent trout fishing. On my arrival at the quiet little inn, I soon perceived that I was an object of especial attention and curiosity. This was to me quite unaccountable, for my dusty dress and diminutive port-manteau were not very great provocatives to interest, among that class of people who estimate a man's importance by the weight of his baggage. However, I was not allowed to remain long in doubt. I had barely time to perform my ablutions and return to the bar-room, when I was thus accosted by the host; 'Glad you are come, sir; we heard you were taken sick, and were afraid you would not get here.' I stared. 'Our poor old master is going fast, sir,' continued Boniface, 'and he is very anxious to see you; I believe he thinks the school won't get on unless he tells you all his plans and regulations.' In a moment I saw into the whole mystery, and was smiling at the odd mistake, when the door opened gently, and a young girl timidly entered.

‘Ah, here comes little Ally,’ said the worthy host, ‘I thought the old man would be in a hurry to see you when he heard you had come; how is your father this evening, Alice?’ ‘He is a little better, sir,’ said the girl, ‘but he is so impatient to see the new master, that I thought I would step over and ask the gentleman if he would be kind enough to come to-night.’ ‘I dare say he will, Ally,’ said the garrulous landlord. ‘You see, Mr. Smith,’ added he, turning to me, ‘our old schoolmaster has had a paralytic stroke, and it has made him quite helpless, but he still feels an interest in the school he has taught for so many years, and I suppose he wants to see if you are as good a scholar as you were represented to be to the committee.’ All this time, Ormesby, I was gazing at the fair creature who stood before me. Imagine a delicate and graceful girl of some seventeen summers, with a face of almost infantine freshness and beauty, peeping from under a coarse cottage bonnet, and you will have some faint idea of the first appearance of Alice Grey. It suddenly came into my head to carry on the farce, at least for a little while, and having discovered by dint of judicious questions, that no one in the village had ever seen the expected Mr. Smith, I found no great difficulty in assuming his character. I accordingly accompanied the pretty Alice to her home. It was a low one-story cottage, almost overgrown with honeysuckle and ivy, and would have been very picturesque but for an unsightly building projecting on the side, which I afterwards ascertained to be the village school-house. When we arrived at the door, Alice left me for a moment, but returning almost immediately, led me into a small neat

apartment, where reclining on a low bed, supported by pillows, I found her father. The old man closed the book, (a volume of Euripides,) from which he had been reading, and extending his hand, feebly expressed his pleasure at my arrival. As I looked on his expansive brow, his clear eye, and the long white locks which fell upon his shoulder, I thought I had never seen a finer or more intellectual head. He had been for twenty years the schoolmaster of the little village of Merri-vale. Arriving there, wearied with the turmoil of a busy world, for which his meek spirit was little fitted, he had married there and was now about to die there. His wife and two children had preceded him to the tomb, so that Alice was the only tie that bound him to life.

“All these circumstances I learned in the course of our conversation, and I also found that the old man, paralyzed as he was, (for the lower half of his body was completely helpless,) still endeavored to attend to his pupils. He could not bear the thought of having his school dispersed ; his bed was therefore placed immediately at the door leading to the little school-room, and he was in the habit of calling up the classes as regularly as when he presided at his well-worn desk, while he deputed to the gentle Alice the task of keeping order among the motley assemblage. I was strangely interested in the simple-hearted old man and his pretty daughter, and as I listened to his plans regarding his pupils my heart smote me for the deception I had practised. I saw he would be sadly disappointed if informed of his mistake, and I knew that in his precarious state, a slight degree of agitation might

cost him his life. I therefore determined to continue my personation of the new master, at least until the real Simon Pure should arrive. I accordingly despatched a note to my servant, directing him to make his way to New-York and there await my coming, while I laid aside for the time all the luxuries to which I had been accustomed, and became the inmate of the 'master's' house.

"Imagine me, if you can, Ormesby, seated at an old and most curiously *whittled* desk, and giving lessons to about a dozen flaxen-headed rustics, together with perhaps twice as many rosy-cheeked damsels. I doubt whether all my philanthropy would have induced me to humor the joke for any length of time, had it not been for the pretty Alice. Her influence was all-powerful among the pupils. The raising of her finger and the glance of her eye towards the old man's sick bed were sufficient to restore order at all times, and as her father still chose to hear the recitations of the classes, my labors were but light. The education of Alice had been carefully directed, with a view to her obtaining her future subsistence as a teacher, and the old man begged me to give her my especial attention. This was no difficult task, for her quickness of perception and rapid flow of thought made instruction a pleasure. I soon found it was far more agreeable to construe Virgil with Alice, than to explain the rules of arithmetic to the young farmers, and many an idle hour did the indolent scholar obtain, while I was mending pens or setting copies for the pretty villager. My only fear was that the real Mr. Smith would make his appearance, but, having learned his address, I wrote privately to

ascertain the state of his health, and found he had been compelled to seek a southern clime, so that I no longer stood in dread of appearing as an impostor before I was ready to state the truth. However, I soon became heartily tired of my new freak of folly, and should scarcely have continued it so long had it not been for the pleasure I found in watching the noble impulses of a pure and unsophisticated mind. But why make a long story about it? I have wooed and won Alice Grey under the guise of a poor schoolmaster, and not until she is bound to me by irrevocable ties will she know the brilliancy of her destiny.

"And her father?"

"He gave us his blessing, and is quite content to see Alice the wife of his successor."

"But are you prepared, Frankfort, for the many ill-natured remarks to which the slightest taint of rusticity in your village bride will give rise?"

"Certainly; I care not a pin's worth for the criticisms of the fashionable world. Alice is quiet, lady-like, and gentle; if she lacks the mincing airs of the boarding-school dolls of society, she possesses a simplicity infinitely more attractive."

"Do you not fear the influence of gayety and fashion upon a mind so totally ignorant of the allurements of the world, Frankfort? Many a clear eye has been dazzled by unwonted brightness."

"I will tell you frankly the state of my feelings, Ormesby. I look upon my marriage as an experiment. I am thoroughly wearied of the life I have led for the last twelve years, and I am willing to risk every thing for a change. I have studied the temper and habits of

Alice Grey, and believe her to be truth itself. She loves me with that tender, childlike affection which is more natural, considering the disparity of our years, than an ardent passion ; and I cannot but hope that this affection, together with the gratitude she will feel when made acquainted with her true condition, will preserve her untainted amid the atmosphere of fashion. But I shall leave her to the guidance of her own impulses. I do not wish her to be directed by *my* will, I seek a woman whose heart is sufficiently uncorrupt to be her best director. If Alice be such a woman, I shall be happy ; but if I am doomed to disappointment—if I find her adopting the deceptive forms of society, and becoming a mere woman of fashion, then will I ‘whistle her down the wind,’ and leave her to her own pursuits.”

“Frankfort, with such feelings you ought not to marry.”

“Why not?”

“Because you are receiving more than you give. You take the homage of innocent affection and you give in return the cold, calculating regard of one who has long since expended his fervid feelings. You expect the most entire devotion, and you offer her the half-withheld attachment of one who distrusts her sex. You expose her to the full glare of wealth with all its temptations, and resolve even now to cast her off if she be dazzled by its splendors.”

“But I anticipate no such result, Ormesby ; I think she will be proof against all temptation, and if my love be less fervid than in the days of my boyhood, it will be more durable.”

"I hope it may be so," said Ormesby, "but I must confess I have my doubts on the subject. Few girls of eighteen are sufficiently discreet and prudent to suit the notions of—"

"Of a husband of forty, I suppose you mean," said Frankfort, laughing; "why man, you are as distrustful of me as if I were a woman."

"More so, Frankfort, for I have less faith in the generosity of man's nature."

"Well, let us each enjoy our own opinion, and abide the result; but now, with your permission, I will see your wife, Ormesby, for I am in need of her assistance in the choice of a wedding-dress for my village bride."

If women could read the calculations which enter in and mingle with the affections of men, how often would they shrink from the homage which is offered them—the homage which they repay by the sacrifice of themselves. Alice, young, warm-hearted, and sincere, had given her affections, without reserve, to the "new master." His poverty had awakened her pity, his talents excited her respect, his kindness won her love, and she wedded him at the bedside of her dying father, without one thought of worldly interest to disturb the pure current of her tenderness. Her marriage was a sad one, however, for the excitement proved too much for her old father, and on the following morning he was found lifeless in his bed. He had passed from sleep unto death without a struggle. Overwhelmed with grief, Alice gave little heed to her husband's arrangements respecting the school, and it was not until he announced to her his intention of quitting New

Hampshire, that she learned he had relinquished his charge. Passively yielding to his will, she allowed him to conduct her where he would, and a prolonged tour through Canada and along the lakes, aided much in restoring her feelings to their wonted cheerful tone. It was not until then, when he saw her sunny temper once more lighting up her fair face, that he conducted her to his stately home, and revealed to her astonished gaze the riches of which she was now mistress.

At first Alice seemed like one in a dream. She almost feared to close her eyes lest the rich and beautiful things by which she was surrounded should fade like fairy gifts from her view. But when the tumult of her feelings had subsided,—when she could sit down calmly and reflect upon all that had occurred, a painful thought arose within her mind.

“Why,” said she to herself, “why did he not tell me of this? how could he deceive me with details of poverty and plans for economy and industry? Can affection thus voluntarily utter the language of falsehood?” To her sensitive mind such a thought seemed like ingratitude, and yet she vainly strove to repress it. Again and again it occurred to her, even in the midst of the confidences of wedded love, and she was chilled by the first faint shadow of distrust long ere she knew the deep darkness of suspicion’s cloud.

Alice was now placed in a painful and unnatural position in society. “Have you seen Mrs. Frankfort yet?” was the common question among the “exclusives,” and various were the criticisms to which the poor girl was subjected. A few romantic young ladies

thought her timidity very charming, but to the hard and worldly characters, who are always to be found among the leaders of fashion, the blushing and sensitive Alice was a mystery and a marvel. They were perfectly scandalized at her deficiency in the accomplishments deemed requisite in society. She could not dance, she was ignorant of scientific music, she did not know the use of finger-glasses, she had been heard to laugh out loudly and gleefully while at an evening party, and she had actually been seen eating fish with her knife. These, and many similar enormities were laid to her charge, and Alice felt that she was the object of continual remark. But, although ignorant of many minute points of etiquette, she was by no means deficient in quickness of comprehension and energy of character. She saw that her husband was exceedingly annoyed by her occasional rusticity, and she set herself seriously to work to correct it. She soon found that society would forgive almost any thing in those who contributed to its amusement, and that in order to destroy the odium of being *country-bred*, she must begin by a course of *city extravagance*. Stimulated by a wish to do honour to her husband, and, perhaps too, by that latent vanity which lurks in every human heart, she commenced her career by the study of the arts of dress. Until thus transplanted to the regions of fashion, she had been, if not unconscious, at least regardless of her personal beauty; but she was now urged to make the best use of every advantage she possessed, and, placing herself under the guidance of some of those kind friends who are always ready to assist *others* in spending money, she soon learned how much skilful

management may improve natural loveliness. Sparing no expense, and gifted with native good taste, the "village bride" soon became distinguished as the "best dressed woman in society;" and none but those who know how some persons toil and struggle to obtain such a reputation, can be aware of its importance. Many a woman has wasted her time, neglected her children, forgotten her duties, and ruined her husband in the effort to acquire it. In proportion as Alice began to feel at ease in society, she ceased to excite remark by her simplicity of manners and frankness of speech. With the same sincerity of heart, she had learned to throw the veil of courtly grace over the unpleasant truths which people like not to hear, and in less than two years from the period of her marriage, Mrs. Frankfort's appearance and deportment were as much admired as were her brilliant parties and splendid house.

Few young hearts can resist the allurements of wealth, gayety, and fashion, and Alice was certainly subjected to great temptation. The restraints which had at first seemed irksome to her, became daily less burdensome, and at length she was as much devoted to the pursuits of pleasure as if she had been educated in the atmosphere of fashionable society. The stimulus of company became essential to her comfort, and the languid inertness of her morning hours, the natural result of continual festivities in the evening, was only to be dissipated by fresh excitements. The village bride was fast becoming the *faded* and *ennuyée* woman of fashion.

In the meantime, Frankfort was in the situation of

a child who has ignorantly set in motion a machine which he cannot stop. He knew but little of his own nature when he thought he should be indifferent to the sarcasms of his gay friends, and a casual jest which he overheard, respecting "*Harry Frankfort's school-mistress*," aroused him to the utmost indignation. He had earnestly urged on Alice the necessity of conformity to the customs of society, and placed at her disposal a large sum of money, to be devoted expressly to the expenses of a fashionable career. But he foolishly expected her to do all these because *he* wished it, and to check her course just at the proper point—as if a young, inexperienced woman was likely to be the judge of such a period, or capable of acting from mere calculation in a matter so closely depending on feminine weakness and vanity. Instead of remonstrating with his young wife and expressing his wishes on the subject, he acted upon his principle of self-guidance, and while he awaited in moody silence the result, he treasured up within his heart every thing which he could wrest into an expression of ingratitude and indifference towards him. Too proud to hint at the jealous pangs which he suffered when he saw her surrounded by the foplings of the day, he suffered her to receive their attentions, and listen to their flatteries, when a word from him would have been sufficient to drive them from her presence. Alice loved her husband too well to derive any real pleasure from the society of others of his sex, but she was delighted with her triumph over those who had once looked down upon the little rustic, and she was thus led by vanity to the very verge of error, without being conscious of having taken one step in the wrong path. It was the

duty of her husband to have watched over the strong impulses of a nature which had never before been exposed to temptation, but Frankfort possessed one of those stern yet distrustful tempers which, while willing to believe the worst, was disposed to visit error with unsparing severity. A deviation from his standard of right, was in his eyes an unpardonable crime, and he watched in sullen silence the gradual change in his wife's habits of life. Yet so carefully did he mask his feelings beneath the guise of kindness that Alice dreamed not of their existence. A faint suspicion that her husband's manner was less tender, sometimes crossed her mind, but her confiding temper rejected it as a vain fancy, and she was therefore but ill prepared for a sudden disruption of the ties which bound them together.

One evening she had just turned from her toilet, attired in almost queenly splendor, when the carriage of a friend, who had called to convey her to a party, rolled up to the door. As she stepped lightly across the hall, she opened the library door, and looking in, said, "Do not be late to-night, Harry, I feel as if I shall be ready to come home quite early." Her husband made no reply, and the next moment he was gone. But little did she think, as she listened to the light jest and uttered the merry repartee that night, that she had looked her last upon the face of her husband. At a late hour she returned alone.

Piqued and wounded by her husband's neglect of her wishes, she had half determined to appear downright angry with him, but her anger was soon checked by the tidings that he had left the house soon after her

departure, taking with him his servant and a quantity of baggage. Without waiting to disrobe herself of the brilliant array, she hurried to the library. The gray dawn was just peeping in at the open casement as she entered the room, and uttering an exclamation of joy she sprang forward to seize a packet which she saw upon the table. It was directed to herself, and eagerly breaking the seals, she found a number of bills from her milliner, jeweller, confectioner, etc., all accepted and endorsed on the back with the word "paid," in the handwriting of her husband. As she threw them impatiently aside, her eye fell upon a letter which contained these words :

"For nearly three years, I have watched in silence the gradual corruption of your heart : for nearly three years I watched the infusion, drop by drop, of insincerity and folly into the pure fountain which was to me as the gem of the desert ! Alice, I wedded you for your truthfulness, your purity, even more than for your loveliness, but you have deceived my trust. The fulsome flattery of every fool in society has been breathed upon the stream of thought, until it no longer reflects the unbroken image of the heaven which once smiled upon it. You have turned from the quiet scenes of domestic happiness and chosen the path of gayety. I leave you to pursue it. In the hands of my agent you will find the sum of \$5,000 per annum, subject to your order, and, by *that*,—which is exactly the *half* of my income,—I trust you will regulate your expenses. Henceforth we must live apart. I shall sail for England in order to avoid the fracas of a public separation, and if

you still continue your usual course of life, my absence will be a reproach to *me* only. I know the step I am now taking will not be justified by the world, for a disappointment which *only* affects one's *happiness* is not considered a sufficient cause for a severance of those ties, which, without congeniality of feeling, are worse fetters than those of the galley slave. You will be looked upon as a martyr, and I as a monster ; but so be it. I expect no answer to this letter : the suspicions which have long been growing up in my heart, (suspicions not of your conduct but of your candor,) have now become a part of my belief, and all your assertions will not change my opinion. You are but like your sex, your birthright is insincerity. I thought to have wedded disinterested affection—I did not know how quickly the deceitfulness of the heart can wither the fairest plants that take root within its soil.

“One word, and I have done. If you are not yet too deeply imbued with the love of vanity, there is a faint hope for the future. Withdraw from the scenes of gayety,—spend your life in the seclusion which befits penitence, and if at the expiration of two years from this day, you seek a reconciliation, you will not find me inexorable. A letter may be *then* left with my agent,—but remember I receive no letters at an *earlier* period. Farewell, and may you, for both our sakes, learn wisdom in the loneliness to which I now consign you. H. F.”

Words were too feeble to describe the effect produced upon the mind of Alice by these bitter and unmerited reproaches. It was the first intimation she had

received of her husband's displeasure, and it came to her in the shape of a scathing thunderbolt. Her first impulse was to seek him and implore his forgiveness, but the more she pondered over the fatal letter, the more her heart rebelled at the thought of appearing as a suppliant before him. "Three years," murmured she; "three years has he been cherishing evil thoughts against the wife of his bosom,—for three years has my head been pillowed upon a breast which was swelling with bitterness against me,—three years of frank, confiding tenderness on my part,—of coldness, suspicion, deception on his. And yet he can accuse me of falsehood and a love of the world. Who taught me that love of the world? who bade me dress, and act, and talk like my companions? Shame! shame on such base distrust! I will not bow my proud and stainless nature before the being who can thus cherish vile suspicions of me, because forsooth in obliging his sovereign will I learned to love my tasks." Alice possessed that quiet kind of temper which often serves to conceal powerful passions and great obstinacy of purpose. She felt herself unjustly condemned, and every evil emotion in her nature was aroused. A milder method of reproof would have awakened contrition for her indiscretions, and a submission to her husband's wishes, for well as she loved pleasure, she certainly loved her husband more. But it was now too late, and it was with no other feeling than sullen anger that she beheld on the following morning his name among the list of passengers for London.

During the two years that followed this cruel severance of his domestic ties, Frankfort wandered over

Europe, like an unquiet spirit. In vain he sought to still his heart's vain yearnings amid the gayeties of Paris, or to satiate his weary soul with dreams of beauty beneath the skies of Italy. Proud, cold, and distrustful, he was not likely to make many friends among those who could only behold the surface of character. He had nothing new to behold, for his previous residence abroad had satiated him with sight-seeing. He had no old intimacies to renew, for he had little of that tenacity of affection which makes one always interested in a former friend, even when circumstances have destroyed the friendship. Alone, dispirited, with a weight upon his heart and a sting within his conscience, he dragged out the weary exile which he had allotted himself.

"Why do you not tell me of Alice?" (thus he wrote to Ormesby, now his only trusted friend.)—"why do you not acquaint me with her present mode of life? I have forbidden her to write until two years shall have elapsed, but to you I may confess that my heart yearns towards her far more fondly than in the days of our bridal happiness. Two pictures of the past are for ever before my imagination. I see the sweet, fair face of Alice with the long golden curls drooping over it, as she stood with me at the bedside of her dying father, and plighted me her faith. Again the scene changes, and the dazzling beauty of the queenly creature who looked in upon me as I sat bending over those accursed papers, on that last fatal night, comes before me with such vividness, that I reach forth my arms to grasp the glorious vision. Again and again do these images return to me; they are like haunting spectres in my path.

What to me are the remnants of bygone nations? What care I if my 'tread be on an empire's dust?' Alas, I have stood amid the cold ashes of my own dearest hopes,—I have shivered with mine own hand the household gods who were powerless to guard my home from desecration,—and the strength of my own self-pity leaves me no compassion for widespread griefs. Tell me then of Alice; let me hear that she is striving to win her way back to the heart which is so desolate without her."

But Ormesby could give him no tidings of his deserted wife, except that she was no longer seen in fashionable circles, and that she was supposed to have retired into the country. Vague as was this information, it sufficed to awaken hope in the breast of Frankfort. He believed his severe lesson had not been given in vain, and he anticipated redoubled happiness in the future with his penitent and devoted wife.

Two years had passed away, and the unhappy victim of a fanciful theory of human perfectibility, returned to his native land. With a feeling of hope that he was almost ashamed to indulge, he hurried to the house of his agent, and eagerly asked for letters. One was put into his hands, directed to him in the handwriting of his forsaken wife. Visions of reunion, and of future happiness purchased by a probation of suffering, floated through his mind as he broke the seal. But the paper dropped from his grasp,—it contained the order upon his banker for her annuity. Not a single word accompanied it except the date,—which seemed to show him that her determination had been taken as rapidly as his own, for it was almost two years since the gift had

been returned. In answer to his hurried inquiries, he learnt that Mrs. Frankfort had left the house very soon after his departure for England, and that the key, together with his plate and Alice's jewels, were all in the hands of his agent. In almost frantic haste he flew to the long deserted house, but in vain did he explore the dust-lined chambers of that stately mansion. No other trace of Alice remained than the richly furnished apartments where she had so often presided in the pride of youthful beauty.

"You deserve your present suffering," said Ormesby, as he listened to Frankfort's tale of distrust and stern rebuke, and late remorse; "was there no pity in your heart for the young, fair creature, who had left her native woodlands for the love of the poor and friendless scholar, and who would have borne the blasts of adversity for your sake, with less danger than she met the sunshine of prosperity? Go—seek her through the world, and when you have found her, bow yourself in humble penitence before her whom you deserted in her hour of danger, but hope not for a return of the confidence which might have blessed your wedded life."

Conscience-stricken and despairing, Frankfort listened with unwonted meekness to his friend's rebuke. The thought of what Alice must have suffered, thus thrown penniless upon a selfish world, subdued his stern nature. She had repelled his suspicions of her sordidness by refusing to accept of one cent from his overflowing stores, and a vision of his delicate and lovely wife stemming the waves of want and misery, was ever present to his mental sight. Lonely and sad he set out

upon his pilgrimage of love. Every means that could be invented for the discovery of a lost friend were tried, but in vain ; and, at length, Frankfort resolved to travel from place to place, visiting every city and hamlet in the land, until he found the object of his search, or at least beheld her grave. But his health was now enfeebled, and his progress was necessarily slow. Months, aye years passed in the fruitless search, and daily his quest seemed to become more hopeless.

• It was late in the afternoon of an autumnal day, that he drew his bridle rein before a small inn, in a little village far remote from the busy world. The passing bell,—that sound so unfamiliar to the residents of a great city,—that sound which falls with such melancholy import on the ear of the villager, who knows it tolls for a departed friend,—was echoing through the hamlet ; and as he counted the rapid strokes which told the age of the deceased, he sighed. “Twenty-six!” murmured he, “dead at twenty-six! and doubtless friends stand weeping around the early grave as if death were not a haven of rest and a refuge from misfortune.” Leaving his horse at the inn, he strolled onward towards the humble burial ground, directed by the sound of the mournful bell ; but ere he reached it, he was met by a group of children bearing flowers in their hands, and weeping bitterly as they hurried towards a cottage by the roadside. With a feeling of compassionate tenderness that in earlier days had been a stranger to his bosom, Frankfort addressed himself to the eldest of the little group, and asked the cause of such excessive grief. “It is our dear schoolmistress,” sobbed the child, as she ran forward, “she died yesterday, and we are bringing

flowers to strew over her grave." Impelled by a feeling for which he could not account, Frankfort followed the footsteps of his young guides, and found himself entering along with them into the house of mourning. In the centre of the narrow apartment, surrounded by a group of weeping children, stood a coffin. The gray-headed sexton approached, and lifting the lid, was about to cover for ever the face of the pale clay, when his arm was arrested by an iron grasp, and Frankfort, gasping for breath, and pale as her who lay shrouded before him, was bending over the dead. One glance sufficed to tell her whole history. His wife—his injured and proud-hearted Alice, lay before him. His repentance came too late. Her bitter and unforgiving sense of wrong had gone with her to the grave!

Do you ask what became of Frankfort, my young reader? It is scarcely a year since he was called to his long account, and many a rich legacy to various beneficent institutions has emblazoned the name of him whose life was embittered by the want of that "charity" which "suffereth long and is kind." Fretful, querulous, and suspicious, his infirmities of temper increased with his decrepitude, and he sunk into the grave of second childhood, unpitied and unwept.

MANŒUVRING;

OR, THE DOCTOR'S VISIT.

"The twig is limed, the net is duly spread,
Think you the bird will 'scape the fowler's toils?"

"Is that the doctor's gig, Mary? Quick, arrange these pillows, and throw that rose-colored shawl on the arm of the sofa;—not there, you stupid creature; give it to me."

The speaker was a delicate and pretty woman, who in the dim light of a judiciously shaded apartment, seemed to have scarcely numbered her five and twentieth summer, though the broad glare of daylight might have discovered the fact that some *ten* additional years could be counted among her past possessions. Reclining on a couch, supported by lace-bordered pillows, with the folds of her white dress so disposed as to display the symmetry of her figure, while one small and delicately-slippered foot was allowed to peep out as if by accident, she really looked exceedingly interesting. Hastily concealing the novel she had been reading, and assuming the languid air of habitual suffering, she awaited the entrance of the doctor, whose footsteps were already heard upon the stairs. As he approached, she raised her eyes timidly to his face, then practised

that quivering of the veined and fringed lids, which a Juno-eyed woman can so well perform, and finally dropped the long lashes over her dark-blue eyes, as modestly as a maiden of fifteen. It was, in reality, a very pretty piece of acting, and such the doctor seemed to consider it, for he stood calmly beside her, and not until all these little manœuvres had been effected, did he attempt to feel her pulse, or to inquire into her state of health.

"Ah, doctor, you are very good to come so promptly," said the patient, "I have had such a wretched night, that I could no longer dispense with your advice. You must come and see me every day, my dear sir. Your presence does me almost as much good as your prescriptions."

The doctor bowed gravely. "You flatter me, madam. Perhaps your fears induce you to magnify your own danger as much as you do my skill."

"No, doctor, I feel that my hold upon life is exceedingly frail; a disease like mine may prove fatal at any moment."

"What do you suppose your disease to be, madam?"

"Ah, you want to inspire me with hope by your question, but your kind artifice cannot deceive me, doctor. You are doubtless aware that I have an affection of the heart?"

"An affection of the spleen, rather," thought the doctor, as he gravely replied—"I am not aware of the existence of any symptoms which can warrant you in forming such an opinion."

"Alas, my dear sir, the symptoms cannot be mistaken—palpitations of the heart, frequent fits of tremu-

lousness, constantly recurring attacks of nervous agitation, lowness of spirits, and loss of appetite, are certainly tokens of ill-health."

"Yet, these symptoms might be attributed to many other causes besides the serious one you have mentioned. Change of air, exercise, constant occupation both of mind and body, would probably remove all the ailments which alarm you."

"I wish I could think so, but alas!

'Who can minister to a mind diseased,
Or pluck from memory a rooted sorrow?'

The doctor was busily engaged in counting the lady's pulse, and did not choose to hear her pathetic remark.

"You have a very good pulse," said he, "depend upon it you are only a little nervous."

"Allow me to ask you one question, Doctor Selwyn. Do you not think that a physician, in whose hands we place our very life, and who is responsible for the priceless gift of existence, should be made fully acquainted with the state of his patient?"

"Certainly, madam," replied the doctor, arching his heavy eyebrows as he spoke.

"Then you must permit me to encroach upon your valuable time for a few minutes, for the history of my disease is a history of myself. I will not dwell on the details of my early life; with those you are already acquainted, since you cannot have forgotten the beautiful scenes of Woodlands where we were so long companions in youth. Alas! it were better for us sometimes if we could cease to remember early scenes and early

friendships." The widow sighed and cast down her eyes, a tear was glittering on the fringed lids as she raised them to the doctor's face, but no answering emotion met her timid glance. He had taken out his snuff-box, and was, at that moment, helping himself to an enormous pinch, so that he lost the fine effect of a tearful blue eye. Mrs. Merton continued—

"You are probably aware of the persuasion which my parents used to induce me to wed Mr. Merton. He was a man whose character I will not attempt to depict—the grave has closed over his faults, and it is not for me to sit in judgment upon his memory. Suffice it to say, that he possessed no feeling or sentiment congenial with my own. Sordid, avaricious, narrow-minded, and jealous, he could neither understand nor appreciate the character of the warm-hearted, enthusiastic creature, who, in the fulness of her heart, suffered herself to be persuaded into a union with age and ugliness and wealth."

The doctor gave a loud hem! and took a second pinch of snuff. Mrs. Merton sipped some *eau sucrée* from a Venice glass which stood on an *ormolu* table beside her, and continued—

"During the ten years of my married life I suffered the most cruel of all martyrdoms, for it was the martyrdom of the spirit. Mr. Merton never ill-treated me in the usual sense of the term, he allowed me to indulge to a certain extent in the pleasures of society, and surrounded me with what are called the comforts of life, but alas! for the poison that mingled its deadly draught with every cup of enjoyment he could provide no antidote. Unity of feeling and reciprocal affection were

wanting, and without these, what are all the richest treasures of earth?" The pretty widow paused for a moment, and pressed her perfumed handkerchief to her eyes, while the doctor fidgeted on his chair, and let his cane fall rather heavily upon the floor. She was not slow to perceive these evidences of agitation in the eccentric bachelor, and fancying she had made an impression, she hastened to conclude.

"Will you be at any loss, my dear doctor, to conceive how such a state of feeling should produce disease of the heart. The mind acts fearfully upon the physical frame, and the continual bickerings, the constant disquiet, the total absence of sympathy, which I suffered, threw me into a state of nervous agitation, which has now led to habitual illness. I have now given you as exact a statement of my case as I dare trust myself to describe. If I have concealed from you *one sorrow*, the heaviest and most heart-rending of all,—a sorrow which has weighed upon me from the days of my earliest womanhood, and added its unutterable bitterness to my wretched lot,—if I have hidden from you *one secret recess* in my heart,—you will, I trust, forgive me: that deep cell of memory must never be revealed to mortal eye,—and *least of all to yours.*"

Completely overcome by her emotion, the widow buried her face in the pillows, while she extended one fair hand to the imperturbable doctor, but whether to have the pulse counted or the fingers pressed, we cannot undertake to determine. Doctor Selwyn, however, never forgot his business—he grasped the wrist instead of the soft rosy palm, and thrusting his box into his pocket, he rose to leave the trembling patient.

"Your present agitation convinces me, madam," said he, "that you are a little nervous; allow me to recommend a few drops of sal volatile in a glass of water. I will call again to-morrow, since you desire it, and this afternoon I will send you an asafœtida pill, which you will be so good as to take upon going to bed."

With these words the doctor bowed and withdrew, but as he descended the richly-carpeted stairs, there was a lurking smile on his usually grave countenance, while an arch expression of merry malice glittered in his dark eyes.

"An asafœtida pill," exclaimed Mrs. Merton, starting up from her graceful attitude of grief, as the hall-door closed behind the doctor, "an asafœtida pill indeed! upon my word, Selwyn has become a perfect brute. Well, well, patience must do what one stroke cannot accomplish. He loved me in the days of his early youth, and I do not despair of winning him yet. Oh, if *forethought* were only as wise a counsellor as *afterthought*, how many errors we should avoid in this world. Who could have dreamed that poor Selwyn, the playmate of my childhood, the awkward college-boy who made love to me so fervently and yet so pedantically, would ever have become the favorite of a fashionable coterie! Fifteen years have passed away since we were romantic lovers,—alas! for the flight of time—yet it seems to me but yesterday since I wandered with him around the lovely scenes of his native Woodlands. I wonder if he ever felt resentment towards me for the sudden disruption of our intimacy,—it is true, we were not betrothed, but every thing that love could dictate,

save the final vow which binds heart to heart for life, had been uttered ; and this only remained unspoken because he was too poor to wed. Ah, me ! my soul used to vibrate to his voice, as it has never done since to any joy or sorrow in existence.

‘ No more—no more—oh, never more on me
The freshness of the heart can fall like dew !’

The pure fancies of girlhood have long since been forgotten amid the glittering gauds of worldly vanity. I chose my own course, and if my path has been one of thorns, it has at least led me to the hill-top which I sought. I sacrificed the best years of my life for gold, and now my gold and my still fair face shall win back the lover of my youth. I will yet bear the honored name of him whom men ‘delight to praise, and now, though my youth be past for ever, I will slake, from the long-sealed fountains of affection, the thirst which has been to me a life-long pang.”

While the widow remained thus buried in that pleasant sort of revery which blends pensive recollection with bright anticipation, the doctor was driving rapidly through the crowded streets, making amends by increased speed, for the time which he had wasted on the fair victim of sensibility. He possessed too much acuteness not to perceive her designs upon him, and the recollection of past scenes only seemed to add a tinge of bitterness to the contempt which they excited. At that period of life when the passions of early manhood blend themselves with the pure fresh feelings of the boy, he had renewed a childish intimacy with the beautiful girl, and had yielded up his whole soul to

the impulses of a first affection. But he was no match for his lady-love in worldly wisdom. *His* life had been spent in the study of books—*hers* in the acquisition of the “*arts of design*,” as taught in a fashionable boarding-school. She had entered society with every disposition to become an accomplished coquette, and the enthusiastic collegian was an excellent subject for her first attempt. Whether owing to her inexperience in the delicate science, or to his noble qualities of character, we cannot say, but she certainly committed the great mistake of allowing her affections to become somewhat involved. It was the triumph of nature over art, but as she never again, in the whole course of her life, was guilty of a similar error, the most zealous votaries of worldliness may excuse this single instance of deviation into the path of truth.

Beautiful and vain, she had determined to run a brilliant career in the circles of fashion, and she well knew that the vista which ambition opened before her could not be terminated by “love in a cottage.” For more than a year, she made the young student her sport and tool, practising upon him the arts which she afterwards exercised on a wider field, and learning, from her influence over his true heart, the extent of woman’s power. Then—when her hour of vain triumph came—she turned coldly from all his love, and plunged into the gayeties of society, without one sensation of remorse for the crushed and blighted feelings over which she had trampled in her course. After exhausting the enjoyment which she found in the admiration of the butterflies of fashion, she accepted the

richest of her suitors, and took up her abode in one of the gayest of our Atlantic cities. There she became distinguished for her ostentatious display, while it was whispered that her neglect and indifference embittered her husband's life, and drove him to intemperance as a resource from domestic discomfort. His death finally released her from the responsibility of those duties which she had so carelessly performed, and she found herself a widow with greater joy than she had looked upon herself as a bride. She obtained, by recourse to law, the dowry which his will had denied her, and removing to another city, she determined to carve out a new path to notoriety. To her surprise, she found her old lover established in wealth and fame, and the idea of gratifying her early affection, together with her present ambition, soon suggested itself.

With all her wealth, there was one charmed circle into which the widow could find no entrance. "The exclusives"—those ephemera who, having but a day to exist, bask in the sunshine of fashion as gayly as possible—remembered that Mr. Merton, her late husband, had commenced life as a Chatham-street pawnbroker, and therefore she must not be admitted to the society of the *élite*, who had been all their lives trying to forget their honest mechanic progenitors. Dr. Selwyn, however, the lineal descendant of one of the original patentees of the land, possessed a moderate fortune, fine talents, skill in his profession, musical taste, considerable eccentricity, and being withal a *bachelor*, found ready access into all circles. The B——'s and the C——'s, who looked with contempt on Mrs. Merton's emblazoned carriage and liveried footmen, delighted to

engage Dr. Selwyn at their parties ; and the most aristocratic of our republican damsels was proud of receiving a bow from the courtly physician.

These things first awakened Mrs. Merton's recollections of long forgotten "*love passages*." She consulted her mirror, and she did not see any thing to make her despair, but she did seem to be aware of the fact, that it is easier to awaken a new flame than to rekindle an extinguished one. The charms which, in their rich maturity, might have won many a boyish heart, were powerless when directed against a case-hardened bachelor on whom rested the experience of some forty years. Yet, unconscious of the difficulty she should encounter, she determined to attack him with such a variety of weapons that some one among them must take effect. As a physician, she prepared for him the artifice of failing health and undoubted dependence upon his skill ;—as a "*ci-devant jeune homme*," she offered the fascinations of extreme deference and attention—the most subtle of all flatteries to those who are falling into "the sear and yellow leaf ;"—as the man of sensibility she exhibited to him delicately shadowed pictures of past enjoyments, and dimly traced visions of future happiness ;—and to the lonely bachelor, whose celibacy her vanity attributed to his early disappointment, she meant to lift the veil which shrouded her heart of hearts, and disclose to him a glimpse of secretly cherished affection which had outlived time and change and even marriage.

Dickens tells us that "there are two sorts of people who despise the world—those who feel that the world does not appreciate them, and those who receive the

homage of society while conscious of their own worthlessness." The worthy doctor belonged decidedly to the former class, for, although wealth and honor had fallen to his lot, he knew that they had been bestowed by accident rather than by a sense of justice in society. He remembered his early struggles with poverty and neglect, and he knew that he owed his rise less to his talents than to the lucky chance which enabled him to rescue from a disgraceful death a member of a rich and fashionable family. His knowledge of their secret secured him their patronage, and such was the foundation of his future fortune. He was aware, too, that, even now, he was estimated rather because he was "the fashion," than on account of his really noble qualities, and therefore it was that he concealed his warm feelings beneath the veil of cold politeness, and garbed his originality of mind in the rude attire of eccentricity. But his early disappointment had given a coloring to his whole life, for it had taught him a lesson of distrust which he never forgot. Whatever might be his faith in man, he had none in the truth of woman. He looked upon the whole sex but as so many puppets in a raree show, moved by the secret springs of avarice or interest, set up to be admired for a while and then sold to the highest bidder.

The doctor pondered long over the palpable affection of the widow, and with an inward chuckle, anticipated the final disappointment of her plans; but he determined to humor her whim, and, while he kept himself quite free, to observe her skilful manœuvres. He was still full of such thoughts when he entered one of those abodes of poverty, to which his charity led

him much more frequently than he allowed the world to know. A young girl who had broken her health by the arduous labors of the needle, and was now on the brink of the grave, with a pulmonary attack, was the object of his present attention. She was only a poor sempstress ; the mother for whom she had long toiled, had recently died, and there was none left to feel interest in the dying girl. She was neither gifted nor beautiful,—she gave him neither golden fee nor sweet looks, and yet the doctor felt her gratitude a full reward for his daily visit to the poor patient.

He was musing upon the strange events of fortune and character which his profession enabled him to study, and as he ascended the creaking stairs, he could not but contrast the luxurious apartment he had just left, with the bare floor and uncurtained bed which now met his view. He no longer found his patient alone, however. A female, whose loose wrapper concealed her figure, while a close cap shaded her features, was her companion, and engaged in administering some nourishment as he entered. She immediately disappeared behind a screen which stood across the room, and he gave no further thought to the matter except to congratulate the patient upon having found a friend to attend her. A faint flush crossed the cheek of the pale girl as he took a seat beside her and uttered the words of soothing kindness. He felt that the hour had come when the physician's saddest and severest duty was to be performed, and he did not shrink from the task. Gently but firmly he acquainted her with her true condition, and warned her that, though the dart of death might remain suspended for many days ;

yet she must fall beneath it ere another moon had waxed and waned. He quieted her agitated feelings, awakened her mind to higher thoughts, and while he strove to detach her hopes from earth, he endeavored to fix them upon the Rock of Ages. He reasoned with her, he sympathized with her, he opened the pages of the Sacred Scriptures, and read with thrilling pathos the lofty promises, the winning persuasions of the Book of Faith. Who would have believed that he, who thus smoothed the pillow of disease and death for the child of poverty, was the same being who, among the prosperous and happy, appeared so cold, so unimpassioned, so almost heartless? He little knew that one of the very beings whom he so much contemned, now listened to his words with breathless wonder and interest.

Clara Leslie, though not beautiful, was pretty enough and rich enough to have shone as a belle in society, had not her intellectual and moral nature elevated her beyond the paltry distinction. Her undeviating rectitude, her frank truthfulness of character, and her superiority of mind had made her rather feared than loved in the circles to which she belonged; so that though she had reached her eight and twentieth year, she was still Miss Leslie. Even her bank stock and improved real estate could not embolden a man of fashion to seek the incumbrance of so much plain-speaking integrity and clear-headedness in a wife, while Clara, never having seen any one with whom she would have felt willing to pass her life, was quite content to find herself verging on "*old-maidism*." She was called eccentric because she dressed plainly, kept no carriage, and never danced,

and having obtained the reputation upon such slight grounds, she took advantage of it to pursue her own course, without regarding the gossip of a coterie.

She had conceived a great dislike to Dr. Selwyn, because she believed him to be acting a part foreign to his character, though what that character really was, she was unable to discover. His bland courtesy could not blind her to his secret contempt of the sex, and, on several occasions, when some of his courtly compliments had contained a lurking sarcasm, he had been made to feel the sting of woman's wit from the lips of Miss Leslie. Of course he had but little liking for her, and although she interested him by the blunt honesty with which she uttered her opinions, yet, probably, had each been asked to depict the character of the other, the portrait would have been any thing but flattering. Yet in one respect a great similarity existed between them. Clara Leslie was a creature of the most benevolent feelings, and the haunts of misery re-echoed to her footsteps far more frequently than did the halls of mirth. She did not pour her alms into the widely diffused stream of *associated charities*, but she visited in person the abode of want, and saw with her own eyes what was needed by the sick, the destitute and the sorrowing. She supplied *just what was required, just at the proper time*. She provided not only for the physical, but also for the moral necessities of the poor, for she well knew that food, and clothes, and fuel, were often valueless, unless proffered by the kind voice of sympathy. This was the person who, shrouded from recognition by her coarse garb and the dimly lighted room, had taken her station by the bedside of the humble

sempstress, and ministered to her wants until a proper nurse could be procured. This was she who had listened unseen to the pure precepts of religion and the tender soothing of kindness, from the lips of the fashionable doctor.

Weeks passed away, while Doctor Selwyn, occupied in his usual round of duties, paid his daily visits to the fair widow and to the dying sempstress. The widow grew no better; her "affection of the heart," seemed to threaten a fatal result to somebody, but whether to the patient or the physician remained yet to be decided. In the meantime the young girl gradually declined, until life was but as the glimmer of a wasted lamp; then, and not till then, when the worn and wearied spirit of the suffering invalid rendered her so nervous and irritable, that only the constant presence of her kind benefactress could quiet her restless excitement, did Doctor Selwyn first learn that the patient and devoted nurse of the poor sufferer, was the eccentric, the sarcastic, the haughty Clara Leslie.

"My dear doctor, why did you not come last night? I really was afraid I should not live to see the light of another day. Did you not receive my note?" said Mrs. Merton, faintly, as Dr. Selwyn entered the room. "What is the matter, madam? has any unfavorable change taken place since yesterday morning?"

"Alas! I fear so. I have been dreadfully excited. Old Mrs. Sowerby came to see me yesterday afternoon, and some of her ill-natured gossip agitated me to such

an excess, that I have scarcely slept. This palpitation of my heart is frightfully increased, and I have not been able to overcome my faintness long enough to dress."

The doctor looked at the lady's lace cap, curled locks, and ruffled morning dress, and silently felt her pulse.

Mrs. Merton continued—"I wish that woman would not come here with her ridiculous stories—will you believe, doctor, she told me you were actually going to be married to that queer old maid, Clara Leslie! It was too preposterous for belief, but the mere surmise excited me to a degree almost fatal to my poor nerves. Do allow me, my dear sir, to contradict the report on your own authority."

"You have my authority, madam, for stating that I do not *anticipate* any such union," said Doctor Selwyn, quietly.

"I knew it—I knew it!" exclaimed Mrs. Merton, quite forgetting her faintness, as she rose to an upright position. "Oh, doctor, if you only knew how easily I am excited on a subject which—which—lies so near my heart;—if you could but know what I felt when I heard that you were about to waste the rich treasure of your affections upon that cold-hearted creature. Forgive me—I know not what I say. Heavens! you look agitated," (the doctor was trying to repress a smile,) "have I betrayed my long-hidden feelings? Oh, forgive me—forget what I have said—alas! I am fearfully bewildered!"

All this was said with the prettiest air of excitement in the world; the upturning of her soft and tearful eye—the clasping of her small hands—the heaving of her

agitated bosom—even the slight dishevelment of her long tresses, all added grace and beauty to the picture, for Mrs. Merton knew just at what point to stop, and never allowed *elegant sensibility* to run into the excess of *vulgar emotion*. Tears are apt to make the nose red, and therefore Mrs. Merton's weeping was confined to a gentle suffusion of the large blue eye, while her gentle sighs never degenerated in plebeian sobs. Burying her face in her cambric handkerchief, she appeared quite overcome with her feelings.

"Do not suffer yourself to be thus agitated, my dear madam," said the doctor gravely, while a mischievous smile lurked on his lips, "be assured I shall not misinterpret the feelings which lead you to be so much interested in my welfare. I came this morning with the intention of making a communication to you on the subject, which will set all idle reports at rest for ever."

Mrs. Merton started and looked timidly in his face. "He is going to offer himself," thought she, as she suffered her hand to fall *accidentally* upon his arm.

The doctor rose, and taking the lady's unresisting hand, said—"You have not only my authority, dear madam, for contradicting the report of my being *engaged*, but I will also give you a full and sufficient reason for its falsity—I was, last evening, *actually married* to the lady in question. Miss Leslie is now Mrs. Selwyn, and as the carriage which is now to bear us to Woodlands is now waiting my return, allow me to offer you—*my adieus*."

THE FIRST AND SECOND WIFE;

OR, THE CONFESSIONS OF A DISCONTENTED MAN.

"Few—none find what they love or could have loved,
Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
Necessity of loving, have removed
Antipathies—but to recur, ere long,
Envenomed with irrevocable wrong."

CHILDE HAROLD.

I BELONG to that unfortunate race of mortals, who, not satisfied with the evils which must naturally fall to their lot in the ordinary course of events, seek out new sources of discomfort, and, as it were, manufacture disappointments for themselves. In other words, I am the victim of discontent. There are some temperaments which seem fitted only for unhappiness, and from the fairest flowers of earth, derive a poison with which to feed their morbid fancy: such was mine. Heir to a princely fortune, gifted by nature with a mind capable of availing itself of all the advantages which education could afford, and distinguished by extreme personal beauty, (I may say this without vanity *now*.) it would seem as if all the materials of happiness were within my reach; but there was wormwood enough in my own spirit, to embitter all these springs of enjoyment. My unhappy temper showed itself very early. Even from my boyhood, I can recollect how invariably I loathed

the fulfilment of my own desires. The costly and long-wished for toy, the rare book, the favorite pony, all were alike objects of disgust when once in my possession. Such a disposition can rarely be amended, and yet I think mine might have been controlled, had my kind parents been able to discover the defect in my character ; but, blinded by their affection, they fostered by indulgence, the temper which should have been subdued by discipline.

As I grew to man's estate, this unhappy trait in my character became still more painfully predominant. The pleasures from which I turned in disgust, seemed to me invaluable when I witnessed their enjoyment by another, and, as I was compelled to observe some consistency in my dealings with men, I suffered more than could be imagined by one who has never known the miseries of discontent. Conscious of my personal attractions, and, priding myself upon the polished elegance of my manners, I eagerly sought the society of women. But here my familiar demon haunted me. Women who, at first sight, appeared to me objects of idolatry, lost all their attractions as soon as my vanity led me to believe that I was not an object of indifference to them, and thus, while abhorring the assassin-like spirit of the male-coquette, I was in truth acting the same part. But my day of punishment arrived.

My early years were wasted in pursuits which wearied me, because generally successful ; and, though my heart longed for an object on which to bestow its affections, I was rapidly approaching my twentieth year without having met with a woman whom I could love, when I became acquainted with Ellen Trevor and

her cousin, Maria Leslie. Entirely unlike in person, they were still more so in mind. Ellen was extremely beautiful. A form of almost fairy mould, so small and so perfectly symmetrical, a complexion of dazzling whiteness, eyes blue as the summer heaven, and a profusion of golden ringlets, which all her care failed to confine in the stiff *coiffure* of fashion, combined to form a picture of exquisite loveliness. No one ever dreamed of calling Maria Leslie a beauty, and yet there was a queenly grace in her stately figure, a flashing light in her splendid dark eyes, and an eloquent glow on her smooth cheek, which often threw into the shade the less expressive countenance of her fair cousin. These ladies soon became the objects of my exclusive attention, and I found them decidedly superior to any women I had yet met with. Maria possessed that imaginative temperament which ever belongs to genius, and which enables it to transmute the dross of this world into the fine gold that alone can satisfy its desires; while Ellen, with a moderate share of talent, combined such exquisite tact and nice discernment of character, that it was impossible to determine, with accuracy, what proportion of intellect had really fallen to her share.

For some time, my admiration was very equally divided, but my choice was at length decided in a most characteristic manner. I was one day sitting alone with Ellen, and giving utterance to those tender nothings, which derive such fatal meaning from the look and tone that accompany them, when she interrupted me with a very grave air, by asking me if I was aware that she was an affianced bride. On my expressing surprise, she told me that from her fifteenth year, she

had been betrothed to one who had been the playmate of her infancy, and that her marriage was only delayed until his return from France, whither he had gone for the benefit of his health. "I tell you this," said she, "because I would not appear to play the coquette. I like your society, and wish to number you among my friends, but it is necessary, for the sake of both, that you should clearly understand how impossible it is that we should ever be more than friends." There was a fearless frankness in this disclosure so unlike the usual conduct of women, that my admiration was increased tenfold, and when I looked upon the beautiful girl who so carelessly rejected my affection, even before she knew whether it would be proffered, I felt a pang such as I had never before known.

Her caution produced precisely the opposite effect to that which she had intended. I never looked upon her sweet face without recollecting the tie that bound her to another, and the more I reflected upon the subject, the more firm was my conviction that Ellen Trevor, the only unattainable object which had ever excited my wishes, was the only being who could make me happy. But vain were all my attempts to shake the constancy of woman's affection. She received all my attentions as evidences of friendship, and, satisfied with having revealed to me the truth, she never suspected that she had only urged me forward in the pursuit of my selfish will. How bitterly did she weep over her error, when, at length, with all the fervor of passion, I poured out my heart before her, and prayed her to forsake the lover of her youth, to become the worshipped idol of my spirit. There was flashing scorn in her eye,

when I urged her to commit such an act of treachery to the absent ; but the feelings of the woman overcame her, and she pardoned the tempter for the sake of the love which counselled the guilt. But her constancy was proof against my attacks. "We must part," said she ; "in a very few weeks I expect to greet the return of him whom I already consider my husband, and when you see me again, it will be as the wife of another. You will soon forget that you ever looked on me with other eyes than those of friendship." She kept her word ; the next day she left the city, and though Maria still remained, yet the name of Ellen was rarely mentioned between us.

Tormented as I was by my unquiet spirit, I found my only solace in the society of Maria Leslie. Her versatile genius gave to her conversation the charm of endless variety, and I sometimes wondered at myself for preferring the tamer beauties of her cousin. Yet I certainly did prefer them, and even while I was enjoying the pleasure which Maria's society afforded me, I pined with secret but burning discontent over the reflection, that Ellen was lost to me for ever. A few weeks afterwards, Maria was summoned to officiate as bridesmaid to her cousin. She showed me Ellen's letter ; it was full of cheerful, yet tender feeling, and concluded with expressing their intention of visiting France immediately after the marriage. "You must accompany us, Maria," she added, "and we will try to find some foreign prince who will lay his riches and honors at the feet of my queenly cousin."

"Do you intend to obey your cousin's last request, Miss Leslie ?" I asked.

"I think I shall," was her quiet reply, and she bade me farewell for an indefinite period, without evincing the slightest emotion.

The more I reflected upon her calm, self-possessed manner, the greater was my displeasure ; yet what right had I to expect that she should be moved at parting with one who had never appeared to seek her affection. She had been gone but a few days, when the loss of her society became to me insupportable. A week after the tidings of Ellen's marriage reached me, I wrote to Maria, and with all the eloquence of passion, besought her to return, assuring her that my hand and fortune awaited her acceptance. During the time that elapsed before I received an answer to my letter, I was in a state of feverish excitement. The uncertainty of her decision, the hopes and fears that agitated me, contributed to keep alive my desires, and it was with trembling eagerness that I broke the seal of the anxiously expected letter. It simply informed me that in a few days the writer would be in town, and, as her answer to my flattering proposal would require some explanation, she would defer it until we met. This protracted delay added fresh ardor to my wishes, and when, two days after, I had a private interview with Maria, my feelings were as enthusiastic as the most imaginative woman could desire. But Maria's answer was far from being satisfactory. She told me that highly as she estimated what she called my noble qualities, there was yet one weakness in my character which awakened her distrust. "You are unstable," said she ; "like a child with a toy, you weary of every thing you possess, and much as your happiness seems to depend upon me now, you would

probably repent your rash offer were I to accept it." In vain I argued and entreated ; she continued firm in her refusal, until, overcome by my protestations, and, as I afterwards learned, her own secret attachment, she consented to become my wife. But she made one condition. "I will relinquish my intended journey to France," said she ; "we will meet in society as we were wont to do, but you shall still consider yourself unengaged until the expiration of a year ; if you then continue to regard me as you now do, I will be your wife. But remember, we are not to meet as lovers, for that would destroy the effect of the ordeal to which I wish to subject you."

Finding her inexorable, I was obliged to submit to the required probation, but had she read my character aright, she never would have subjected me to such a test. Had she plighted her faith to me, and then deferred the period of our union, the certainty of possessing her affections would probably have checked the ardor of my pursuit ; but as we were now situated, I was kept in a perfect state of anxiety lest some more fortunate rival should win her from me. Yet, with all my eagerness, I was dissatisfied with my own feelings. My ideas of genuine love were of a very exalted nature, and I was conscious that Maria had not awakened in my heart the intense and passionate devotion which I deemed an essential quality of true affection. I did not consider how foolishly I had trifled away my early feelings, and how impossible it was for me now to love with the ardor of boyhood. If a man could hoard up all the tenderness of his nature—if he could shut up within his own heart all those restless affections which are

ready to bestow themselves on the nearest object, until experience in the world had given strength to his character, then his love would indeed be a treasure beyond all price. But, alas ! "our young affections run to waste, or water but the desert," and yet, with the scanty stream that remains from that once abundant fountain, we foolishly expect to diffuse freshness and beauty over the barren sands of the desert which stretches before us in after life.

My year of probation at length was at an end, and then Maria confessed to me her long-hidden attachment, assuring me that she had done violence to her own feelings in subjecting me to such a trial, but that she considered it necessary, in order to learn whether my happiness was involved as deeply as her own in our union. We were married, and the congratulations of my friends, together with the tenderness of my bride, excited feelings more nearly approaching to happiness than any I had ever before experienced.

Maria was one of the noblest creatures that ever blest with their presence the dreary earth. Her temper was not of that mild, passive, submissive character, which men are apt to laud as peculiarly fitted to woman. In all my experience, I have never found such perfect gentleness, unaccompanied by indolence and inertness of mind, and I believe strong passions to be the natural concomitants of a fine intellect. The best tempers are those which, naturally impetuous, have been subjected to the perfect control of reason and judgment. Such was Maria's. I never witnessed an instance of petulance or impatience during our married life ; yet, I have seen her angry, and nothing was to me so terrible as

the indignant flash of her dark eye, for I well knew it was never undeserved. Her lofty nature could not but despise the littleness that disturbed me, and though her love for me struggled with the feeling, there were times when it would not be concealed. She never came from her dressing-room attired for a ball or party, that I did not examine her *parure* with the scrupulous exactness of a man-milliner; and many a time have I sent her back to her toilet, to remodel the fashion of her dress, because its character of noble simplicity did not suit my ideas of wealth and importance. Her manners, which, before marriage, had seemed to me the very perfection of womanly dignity, became the subject of my captious criticism. At one time, I censured her for too much assumption of stateliness; at another, for an affectation of girlishness, and her unwearied efforts to mould herself to my wishes, must only have convinced her, that even the fabled versatility of Proteus would have been unequal to the task of pleasing so unreasonable a caviller. Yet she loved me most tenderly in spite of my weakness, and, while she endeavored to arouse a nobler spirit within me, she never, even in jest, reverted to my foolish discontent, though it was gradually undermining her fabric of happiness.

About a year after our marriage, a daughter was born to us, in whose delicate little features we traced a most marked similitude to Ellen Trevor. The singular likeness seemed to increase almost daily, until, by a sort of tacit consent, our little one received the name of Ellen. Will it be believed that the face of my babe awakened those dormant feelings which had so long been put to rest? I looked upon the fair brow and

blue eye of my little girl, until I found myself involuntarily recurring to earlier days, and again comparing the stately beauty of my noble wife with the fairy loveliness of her gentle cousin. But I will do myself the justice to add, that the feeling was diligently suppressed, and I fancied it had quite escaped the notice of Maria;—as if any such thing *could* evade the quick eye of devoted affection.

Maria's health continued delicate for some time after the birth of her child, and, in the fullness of my newly-awakened paternal cares, I insisted that a nurse should be provided for the babe. She opposed my suggestion, kindly, but firmly. This, of course, aroused my capitious temper, and I vehemently urged that she should not attempt the charge of her infant. "You will ruin the health of your child, Maria," said I, "and all through your own perverseness."

"Surely," was her calm reply, "a mother is the nurse appointed by Nature's self. I cannot err in obeying her dictates."

"Well," exclaimed I, angrily, "if you choose to kill yourself, it is your own concern, but you will be so good as to remember, that with regard to our child, I have some right to dictate."

Never shall I forget her countenance at that moment. A burning flush mounted to her snowy temples, and as suddenly retreated, leaving cheek and brow and lip of a corpse-like whiteness, while the vivid lightning of her dark eye quenched itself in a burst of uncontrollable tears. Her whole frame shook with convulsed emotion as she raised her clasped hands to heaven, and exclaimed, in a voice of almost remorseful agony, "Oh,

God ! have I made this mine idol, and am I to be punished thus !” Thunderstruck at the effect which my words had produced, I stood for a moment appalled ; but with that self-control which so seldom abandoned her, she mastered her agitation, and turning upon me a look of sorrow, left the room. I did not see her again until we met at the tea-table ; she was then calm and self-possessed, but every tone of her voice was a reproach to me. He who has ever listened to the low, melancholy, flute-like tones of a woman’s voice when her heart is oppressed with sighs she dares not breathe, will understand how great a pang may be inflicted by a sound “so faint, there’s nothing lives ’twixt it and silence.”

She did not allude to our conversation, and the touching pathos of her voice stilled even my unquiet spirit for a time, so that several days elapsed before I ventured to press the subject again. But my peevish temper at length got the better of me, and I once more urged, though in somewhat gentler terms, that a nurse should be procured. Her reply was perfectly gentle, but it was a decided refusal. “Believe me, Ernest,” she said, “I would not risk my child’s health for my own gratification ; I know the nature of my own disease, and it will not affect her ; my little one may imbibe her mother’s milk without inheriting her mother’s breaking heart.”

I was shocked—wounded—mortified ; and we never again alluded to the subject. I have since thought that Maria did me injustice at that time. That my capricious temper embittered her life, I well know, but I am confident that it was her renewed belief of my at-

attachment to her cousin, which then contributed most essentially to her unhappiness. But she was wrong; whatever were my feelings at a later period, I had not then allowed myself to dwell on such a dangerous theme. I was conscious that I did not love Maria as she deserved; I still believed my nature capable of a stronger affection, although experience might have taught me that it were easier to bind up the fallen rose-leaves, and form them again into the unopened bud, than to gather up the scattered fragments of those wasted affections which had been flung at the feet of every new object of admiration. It was the very consciousness of the poor requital which I could make for all her tenderness, that gave to my manner much of its querulousness. Since I could not love her worthily, I desired to see her admired by the world, and little did she think that the petulance, which she deemed an evidence of aversion, was a proof of my deepest interest. With all her strong intellect and clear-sightedness, on this one subject Maria was as easily deceived as the most of her sex. She loved me with all the ardor of her pure and noble nature, and when did such love ever meet with fitting recompense? Rarely can the heart of man, blasted by its fierce passions, consumed by its vain fires, afford one green spot on which such affection can find repose.

Maria felt that I did not return her tenderness, and one exquisitely painful fancy took possession of her mind. From the day when, in the violence of passion, I had uttered those bitter words which expressed so much indifference to her, combined with so much affection for my daughter, she conceived the idea that I had

never loved her, and that pique against her cousin had alone induced me to offer her my hand. The more she brooded over this belief, the more she was convinced of its truth, and at length she wrought herself to such a pitch, that she actually fancied the caresses I lavished upon my child were given principally on account of its resemblance to Ellen. With natural, but alas! ill-judged reserve, she closely concealed from me her suspicions, and while the increasing paleness of her cheek bore witness to some secret sorrow, there was not the slightest change in her manner to warrant any inquiry into her feelings.

We had been three years married, and this state of things had lasted several months, when Ellen returned from Europe, a desolate widow. Her husband had been seized with hemorrhage of the lungs, at an obscure village in France, and, but for the assistance of a young gentleman whom they had known in Paris, and who was accidentally passing through the place, Ellen would have been alone in a land of strangers, with the dying and the dead. The friend who had assisted her in performing the last duties to her husband, aided her to reach her native land, and she who had left us in the flush of hope and happiness, now returned, lonely and wretched.

From the moment of her cousin's return, Maria's health began rapidly to fail. She appeared to have lost all her energy, and an entire listlessness took possession of her. This total sinking of the spirit produced a corresponding debility in her physical frame. There is no fact in medicine better established, than the intimate connexion between the diagnostics

of disease in the mental and physical structure. When the mind is entirely overthrown, as in mania, the body may continue in vigorous health, for there the animal prevails over the intellectual being; but when the mental faculties are impaired by sorrow, and rendered morbidly sensitive by indulgence in melancholy feeling, the physical frame shares the weakness of the mind, and a diseased action of the nerves must be the result.

Maria soon became too ill to leave her room, and Ellen was her constant attendant. Loving her cousin with earnest affection, she yet shrank from the daily intercourse between us, and while her eye ever rested on Ellen with undoubting confidence, it glanced fearfully at my every look and gesture, as if I alone was the object of distrust. Alas! I did not merit such scrutiny. The probability of losing her had awakened all my early attachment, and, true to my unhappy temper, I never loved her half so well as when I was assured that Death had marked her for his own. Day by day she slowly faded from our sight. No severe pain, no prolonged agony characterized her last illness. As the body gradually decayed, the mind seemed to awaken to new life, and methinks I had never before dreamed of the amazing compass of her intellect. The half timid, half distrustful feeling, which had heretofore restrained the free expression of her thoughts, vanished at the near approach of her day of freedom, and the lofty enthusiasm, the high aspirings of her noble mind, and her pure Christian faith, were expressed in language that was indeed "unwritten poetry." Alas! I was like the prodigal, who, after

his heritage has passed into the possession of another, discovers the rich mine of fine gold that lies beneath its surface.

One morning, I was seated by her bedside, gazing anxiously on that pale countenance, which now seemed to hold my all of earthly light, when she suddenly raised her eyes to my face, and said, "Ernest, when I am gone, you will think of our marriage only as a troubled dream."

"No, Maria," exclaimed I, "a dream of happiness, darkened only by my own folly; oh, that you might be spared to learn how deeply, how fondly you are beloved."

A faint flush crossed her sunken cheek, while her eye was lighted up with an expression of tenderness and joy which had long been strangers to her. She smiled sadly as she replied, "Beware, Ernest, lest you win back my thoughts to a world I must resign; oh! if there be a temptation which could draw down my soul from the half-attained heights of yonder Heaven, it is your affection. I have thirsted for it, even as the traveller in the desert pines for a draught of pure water. I have lived but in the hope of possessing it,—I die because it was unattainable. Nay, Ernest," added she as I was about to interrupt her, "I know what you would say; I know you love me now, but not with an affection that satisfies yourself. Would that I were assured my death would purchase your future happiness. But, alas! I fear for you, my beloved husband; there is a fountain of bitterness in your own heart, which mingles itself with all life's sweetest draughts. Oh, that the hand of your dying

wife might be permitted to reach forth the branch of healing, even as the prophet healed the bitter waters of Marah."

The entrance of Ellen put a stop to our conversation, and Maria desired me to leave them together. When I returned, there were traces of long-continued weeping on the cheeks of both.

Three days afterwards she begged to be borne to the window, that she might look once more on the fair face of nature. Her couch was placed so as to afford her a full view of the garden, and she lay for several hours in deep thought, gazing out upon the autumnal landscape. Our little Ellen at length entered the room, and crept to her mother's side. Maria started from her reverie, and laying her hand on the little creature's head, uttered a fervent blessing, then, turning to her cousin, she said, "Remember, Ellen, I have given her to you. Be a *mother* to her!" With these words, she fell back on her pillow in a fainting-fit. She recovered from this, but soon after sunk into a deep stupor, from which she awoke in Eternity.

My grief, for the loss of my wife, was as profound as it was sincere. Now that she was lost to me for ever, her virtues and graces rose up, as it were, in judgment against me, and the tenderness, which, if displayed earlier, might have saved her life, was now lavished upon her memory. My natural disposition to view every thing on its darkest side, rendered me doubly susceptible of real grief, and for many months after Maria's death, I was quite inconsolable. But time wrought its usual changes.

On her death-bed, my wife had confided to her

cousin the charge of our child, and from the time of her mother's burial, my daughter had resided with Ellen. There existed, therefore, a bond of union between us, which could not easily be severed, and as I visited my child daily, I began to find an agreeable solace for my loneliness, in the society of her adopted mother. Ellen possessed that elasticity of temper which offers strong resistance to the pressure of sorrow, and which soon rebounds, even if bowed down, for a time, by an overpowering weight. She had tenderly loved her husband, and had deeply lamented his death, but she was not one to cherish sorrow as a duty, and brood over melancholy resolutions with romantic enthusiasm. When time had subdued her grief, she could be cheerful and even joyous. I have heard the ringing laugh burst from her rosy lips, while the dusky habiliments of deep mourning still enveloped her form ; and the merry sparkle of her bright eyes sometimes gleamed out strangely from beneath the widow's veil. Yet, I never doubted the *sincerity* of her feelings, and perhaps, was not sorry, in this instance, to distrust their *durability*.

The bud of spring, the blossom of summer, the falling leaf of autumn, and the shroud-like snows of winter, had thrice visited Maria's tomb, ere I ventured to think of filling the vacant place in my heart and home. Was it strange that my thoughts should recur to the days gone by, and recall the passionate devotion of my disappointed youth ? In the pride of youth and loveliness, Ellen had rejected my suit, but she had, since then, tasted the bitter cup of sorrow, of disappointment, almost of poverty, and I now hoped a better result. The romance of early youth had for ever faded

from the hearts of both, and it was with little of the trepidation of former times, that I now proffered my hand to the object of my early love. Her reply was characterized by her usual frankness. She assured me of the warmest esteem and friendship, but at the same time avowed her belief that her feelings were not sufficiently warm to satisfy my wishes.

"The love of my youth has departed," said she; "I have not the same capacity for affection which I once possessed; early recollection, and kindly associations, attach me more closely to you than to any one now living, but those very recollections, and the memory of your sweet wife, would have prevented me from ever accepting your hand, had I not made a solemn promise to the dying. I pledged myself to Maria, that if ever you made me such a proposal, and it was not repugnant to my feelings, I would become the mother of her orphan child. If you can deem your affection sufficiently repaid by my deep love for your child, and my warm friendship for yourself, I am willing to become your wife; but I beseech you to examine your own heart, and assure yourself whether you will be content with so cold a return."

Few, even of the most reasonable men, would have been quite satisfied with this calm answer, and it may easily be imagined how little it suited my ardent temper. Her very coldness, however, was a new incitement to the pursuit, and contrary to her advice, with a determination *not* to be content with her friendship, I resolved to make her my wife.

Let no man hope to bring back, in after life, the bright visions of his youth. In my early anticipation,

it seemed to me that to stand at the altar with Ellen as my bride, would be to attain the very summit of felicity ; and yet, when the hour came—when I knelt beside her and listened to the holy words which made her mine for ever—the image of the gentle creature, who had pledged to me the virgin faith of her pure heart, rose up before my troubled fancy, and my heart grew sick as I thought of the love which had passed away from earth and left no trace.

The first few months after my second marriage, were spent in travelling, and, amid its excitements and annoyances, I found opportunity enough for the exercise of my carping spirit, so that my wife escaped its influence. But when we were once settled in our own home, I quickly returned to old habits, and Ellen found, to her great surprise, that the devoted lover was transformed into the peevish husband. At first, she looked upon my outbreaks of temper as accidental, but when she discovered that they were habitual, they appeared to her such evidences of weakness and folly, that they were met by the most unsparing ridicule. With all my affection for Ellen, I had never been ignorant of her vast inferiority to her cousin in point of intellect. I had been accustomed to be treated by Maria, with the most undeviating respect ; no display of infirmity of temper, on my part, could make her forget the honor as well as love which she vowed towards her husband, and it was now exceedingly annoying to find myself a butt for the gay jests of my less gifted wife. But all my ill-humor was of no avail. The more angry I became, the more amusing my conduct seemed to Ellen. High-spirited, but perfectly good-tempered—impertur-

bably cheerful and careless of slight troubles, she could not but consider my petulance as extremely ludicrous. Entirely unaccustomed to study the depths of character, she could only judge of the straws upon the surface, and, overlooking the deep affection of my nature, which would have been a powerful agent in her hands for the subjection of my violent temper, she undertook to meet it with the keen weapons of ridicule, which she certainly used most cruelly.

In my intercourse with my fellow men, I had managed to render myself very unpopular. Inconsistent and captious, it is not to be supposed that I could secure many friends ; but I had hitherto prided myself upon my unbending integrity, and I was now to learn that forgetfulness of the minor morals of life, may lead us into the labyrinth of vice as certainly as want of principle.

My estate was situated in a beautiful part of the country, and all that art could do to embellish nature, had been successfully tried. The grounds were extensive and beautiful, trees of every variety adorned the parks, and the garden and conservatories were filled with plants from every climate under Heaven. It was not in my disposition to be quite contented with any thing, but there was certainly nothing in my possessions which so nearly approached my ideas of perfection, as Hazelton Hall. My fault-finding spirit found little food there, except in trifling affairs which came under the supervision of the gardeners, but, like the princes in the fairy tale, I was destined to have my complacency destroyed by the knowledge that one thing was yet wanting. A friend who was one day walking with me,

happened to observe that my estate only required a natural stream of water to possess every variety of scenery. Woodland and meadow, hill and valley, artificial water-courses and fountains, were all there—the winding course of a mountain torrent alone was absent. From that unlucky moment, the demon of discontent took entire possession of me, and I determined to supply, by some means, the deficiency in my patrimonial grounds.

My next neighbor was a widow, whose small plot of two acres just sufficed to provide subsistence for herself and idiot son. Her land ran back to the foot of a craggy mountain, through whose deep ravines plunged a rapid brook. Just within the limits of her little farm, the stream dashed over a cluster of rocks, forming a tiny waterfall, and then widening its course, wandered off in inimitable beauty, until it lost itself in a large river some ten miles distant. I now cast a covetous eye upon the little spot which contained the only gift that had not been lavished upon me. To possess that rivulet, I would have given almost any price, but like Naboth, she refused to part with the land which had been tilled by her fathers. No temptation could induce her to sell it. Her idiot boy had made companionship with every stone and tree, and the place was endeared to her no less by his attachment to it, than by early recollections. I then endeavored to purchase the rocky and untillable portion which formed the channel of the brook, but this was her son's favorite resort. His chief amusement was fishing in the stream, and no money was sufficient to buy it. This opposition to my wishes, of course, augmented them. I was resolved to include

the mountain torrent within the limits of my estate, and I set to work to discover some means of accomplishing it.

Among the rubbish which, in the course of several generations, had collected in the garret of Hazelton Hall, was a chest of old deeds and papers. These I carefully examined, in the hope of discovering something which might terrify the old woman into a sale of her land, for I knew that it had, in earlier times, formed a portion of our family patrimony. With the help of an attorney, whose poverty rendered his loose principles an easy purchase, I succeeded in discovering an old deed which clearly established a former title to the widow's farm. I sought by this to intimidate her into a sale, but her sturdy spirit was aroused, and her sense of justice made her more unmanageable than ever. I was perfectly well convinced that the property had been legally sold by one of my ancestors, but I knew that no proof of such sale existed, except a memorandum in my possession, for a fire which had consumed the farm-house, some years previous, had destroyed with it the title deed to the little farm. I therefore claimed the place as having been only *leased* to the widow's ancestors, and a very slight change in the wording of the memorandum which I held, was sufficient to establish my claim. This necessary alteration in the paper was skilfully made by my attorney, and I immediately commenced a lawsuit for the possession of the property.

Dame Holden, the widow, was a singular being. To one half the village, she was an object of pity, to the other, of terror. Her countenance, though worn with care, and browned by exposure, still bore traces

of the bold and masculine beauty for which it had once been distinguished. Her figure was tall and gaunt, and her peculiar style of dress, which consisted of a fisherman's coat, belted over her feminine attire, and a man's hat, added greatly to the wildness of her appearance. Her extreme beauty had been her bane in early life, and the child, the idiot-boy of whom she was so fond, was born before the church's blessing had been pronounced upon his parents. Their marriage, afterwards, silenced the outcry of their indignant neighbors, but could not efface the stain. Grace Holden had been scornful and overbearing in her day of pride, and her companions now delighted to repay her the contempt they had once received. Her violent passions were exasperated almost to frenzy; her temper became moody and sullen, and she finally drove her husband to sea, where he perished in a storm. Remorse was now added to the host of evil passions which raged within her breast, and, though usually cold and stern in her demeanor, when aroused to anger, she was indeed a fearful woman. Her son, now nearly twenty years of age, was a harmless idiot. To bask in the sunshine, to chase butterflies in the meadow, to lie beside the mountain stream, watching the course of the tiny waves, and singing some monotonous melody, were the only occupations of "crazy Willie." All the affection of his mother's nature seemed centred upon her boy, and any injury inflicted upon him, was sure to be severely resented.

My wife was in town at the time my suit against the poor woman was commenced, nor did she know any thing of it until her return to Hazelton Hall. She remonstrated with me earnestly on the subject, but

she assumed a tone of indignant reproof, to which my proud spirit never could submit. I knew that she thought me actuated by the most paltry feelings, and guilty of the grossest injustice, but I had not generosity enough to acknowledge my error, and retrace my steps. This gave rise to the first serious difficulty between Ellen and myself. It is needless to dwell on the circumstances of my lawsuit. The widow could produce no authenticated documents to prove her title to the land, and the paper which I brought forward, secured sufficient evidence that it had been only leased to her family. Her farm was accordingly adjudged to me, but my conscience bore upon it the weight of something very like forgery. The day following the decision of the court, I visited Dame Holden, in order to offer her quiet possession of the house during her life. I found her seated on a large stone, which was so placed as to form a convenient resting-place, just without the porch, and poor Willie lay at her feet, trying to form wreaths of the wild orchis which he had just gathered.

"So you are come to take possession," said she, as she raised her eyes from the ground.

"No, dame," I replied, "I came to bid you still consider the house as your own, during your life; the mill-stream is all I wish to retain, and that, I shall order to be enclosed within my grounds as soon as possible."

"The mill-stream!" exclaimed she, "call you that torrent a mill-stream? Have you robbed the widow and the fatherless, only that you might imprison the free mountain brook, and win sordid pelf from its glad-some waters? Go, Ernest Hazelton! Grace Holden

will find a home beneath the sods of the churchyard, ere she will set foot again on the land you call your own. You have robbed the widow of her shelter, but sorrow can yet find you beneath your stately roof-tree ; you have driven the helpless orphan into beggary, but your own little one will never smooth your gray hairs in the coffin. The curse of the poor and the oppressed is upon you."

I shuddered, involuntarily, as she spoke, but, mastering my feelings, repeated my wish that she should still abide in the house. She arose, and drawing up her tall figure, exclaimed, "You have wrought out the fiend's own bidding! You have despoiled the widow, and *murdered* the unresisting."

"Murdered!" I repeated.

"Ay, murdered!" cried she ; "my poor boy lives but in the pure air of the sunny hills, and amid the wild-flowers of his native valley ; think you the simple lad will not pine amid the tainted atmosphere of yon crowded city, whither I must now repair to seek the bread which supports life ? He will die—yes, he will die, and his blood will I require at your hands ;—till then, we meet no more :—the curse may be slow in its work, but it will be sure!"

Shocked and unnerved, I turned away, and as I reached the summit of the nearest hill, I perceived Dame Holden and her son, wending their way towards the distant town.

The first consequence of this unjust alienation of my neighbor's land, was an increased coldness between Ellen and myself. She could not forgive my want of integrity, and her manners were characterized by in-

difference and restraint. Contrary to her expressed opinion, I determined to build a fanciful little mill upon the stream, not that I ever expected to make use of it, but simply because I wanted to cover a projecting cliff with some picturesque structure. When it was completed, I desired Ellen to accompany me in a walk to the spot, but she positively refused, and avowed her determination never to bend her steps towards the despoiled heritage of the widow. This obstinate adherence to her own will, in opposition to mine, exasperated my angry feelings, and a scene of mutual recrimination ensued between us. I afterwards learned that she had ordered the nursery-maid never to take my little daughter towards the mill. This was simply a precaution for the child's safety, but my distempered fancy construed it into a contumacious disposition to oppose my wishes, and I therefore made it a point to encounter the girl in her walks, and, taking the child under my own charge, to conduct her to the mill. The little creature soon became very fond of the beautiful spot, and I forbade the servant to inform my wife of our frequent visits, lest she should attempt to prevent them. The girl gladly promised to obey me, for she had formed an intimacy with a young man who acted as under gardener, whose cottage stood but a few rods from the brook, and she therefore was by no means unwilling to second my wishes with regard to her frequent visits.

One day I had gone to visit a distant neighbor, on business, and the servant took my little Ellen out upon her usual walk. They reached the gardener's cottage, where the girl took her seat in the porch, leaving the

child to play among the flowers. Beguiled by the persuasions of her lover, she finally entered the house to partake of some rustic dainties, and the child was, for a time, forgotten. According to the servant's account, scarcely half an hour escaped, when she thought of her charge, and hurried off in search of her, but she was nowhere to be found. Filled with terror and remorse, the girl hastened home to her mistress with the tidings, and immediately the whole household set out in search of the child. The mill-stream was the first thing that entered the thoughts of every one, but the woman declared so positively that the child could not cross the bridge alone, and, of course, could not reach the mill, which overhung the deepest part of the stream, that they were willing to believe she had strayed among the trees. It was sunset when I reached home, and learned the tale. Conscience was a surer guide than any other, and I felt certain that if I found my child, it would be on the widow's heritage. With my usual impetuosity, I tore up the floor of the little mill, and in doing so, descried that a plank had been recently lifted, as it lay quite loose upon the beam. Excited almost to madness, I tied a rope around my body and plunged amid the deep, black waters immediately beneath the mill wheels. It was too dark under the shadow of the cliff to discern objects, but I groped about with my hands and feet, until I grasped something that felt like drapery. I felt myself suddenly drawn up by the rope which still bound my waist, but I remember nothing more, until I found myself lying on the grassy sward, with the lifeless body of my child beside me.

This was not the effect of accident ; my child had fallen a victim to ~~some~~ murderous hand, and my thoughts instantly recurred to Dame Holden. Her curse, her threats of vengeance, all seemed calculated to subject her to suspicion, and half frantic with grief and rage, I immediately applied to the nearest magistrate for a warrant to apprehend her. A few hours afterwards, I learned that she had been seized in the neighboring town, where she had been found seated by the dead body of her son. I remembered the words of the wretched woman when we last met : " My boy will die, and his blood will I require at your hand "—and I was convinced that she had been the murderer of my darling child. She was accordingly lodged in prison to await her trial, and I followed my sweet little one to the grave, with a heart torn by anguish and remorse. A few weeks afterwards, Dame Holden was brought up to answer to the charge of murder, and every evil passion of my nature was concentrated in the one fearful desire of revenge. But I was destined to be disappointed. From the evidence adduced, it appeared that the old woman and her son had occupied a part of a ruinous building which had formerly been a factory, in the outskirts of the town—that she was in the habit of providing food by her daily labor, and for that purpose, generally left her son alone—that, for three days previous to that on which the child was found drowned, she had not left the house, in consequence, as the neighbors had ascertained, of the illness of her son. No one knew at what time he had died, but she had not been seen to leave the house, and it was believed • that she had never left her son's side from the time he

was taken ill, until the moment when she was seized by the officers of justice. It was also proved that a wagoner, who happened to be passing along the road which commanded a view of the mill and bridge, had seen a little child standing about the centre of the bridge, quite alone, and of course, the assertion of the servant, that the child could not cross the bridge alone, was of no import.

To every unprejudiced person, it seemed far more probable that the child had wandered across the bridge and fallen, accidentally, into the water, than that Dame Holden should have left the death-bed of her son, and travelled ten miles, in order to perpetrate a murder ; especially, when it was considered that she could scarcely have anticipated meeting the child in that spot. Her threats of vengeance, and the strange coincidence between the death of her child and mine, were the most suspicious circumstances, but there was no testimony sufficient to convict her, and, after a patient investigation of the affair, she was acquitted. Though I knew that the judge and jury had acted uprightly and conscientiously in the matter, yet I was as well convinced then, as I am now, that she was the murderer of my child, and my reproaches against those who had refused to convict her, were so unjust, as to destroy all public sympathy in my behalf. Once, and once only, I beheld the miserable old woman again. It was on the high road, a short distance from my own house, that I encountered her, and with a shudder which I could not repress, I endeavored to pass on, but planting herself directly before my horse, she exclaimed with a smile of fiendish malice, " How like ye the first draught

from the cup of curses? You have tasted its bitterness, but you have not drained it to the dregs as I have done. Your fair halls are now as desolate as my lowly hovel—the rich man and the despoiled widow, are now equal in their sorrow; we are both childless! Your babe lies beneath the stately marble, and my boy slumbers amid common earth, but they shall meet in Heaven—the sinless idiot and the innocent child will meet in that pure world where you and I shall never come!”

“Vile hag,” exclaimed I, as I strove to seize her, “you murdered my babe!”

“Ask of the winds the tale,” muttered she, as she glided from my grasp. “You coveted the mountain stream, and your little one has drunk deep of its waters!” and with these words upon her lips, she turned from me and plunged into the thick woods which skirted the road. I never saw her again, nor could I learn any tidings of her after fate. She had accomplished her purpose—she had wrought out her revenge, and she disappeared like an evil vision of the night.

Sorrow generally softens the obduracy of the human heart, but my grief was so mingled with bitter feelings, that it only hardened my stern nature. I became irritable in proportion to my mental anguish, and my exacting spirit at length rendered me an object of fear to all my household. My wife had, by this time, learned to understand my temper, but to bear with it, required more affection than she possessed. She felt that she had wedded me in compliance with my passionate entreaties, and she seemed to demand some

acknowledgment of the boon she had bestowed. Her cheerful temper had no sympathy with my sullen mood, her evanescent emotions could have no part in my fits of brooding melancholy. Kind-hearted and affectionate to those who reciprocated her regard, she yet possessed the faculty of banishing from her mind all unpleasant reminiscences. When I remembered the profound tenderness and deep feeling of my former wife, I thought Ellen too volatile to receive any serious impression. But I did her injustice ; she was, in reality, an amiable woman, capable of giving and receiving happiness, and eminently calculated by her hopefulness of temper, to lighten the burdens of life to all who came within the influence of her sunny cheerfulness. This very characteristic now became, in my eyes, a sin. I almost hated her for the merry laugh which sometimes broke upon my ear, after my child's frightful death had jarred every harmonious chord in my bosom. I might have known that she who could so far forget the husband of her youth as to allow another to occupy his place, could scarce be expected to cherish fond memories of another's child.

While my feelings were thus gradually chilling towards the object of my earliest, and, as I once thought, fondest attachment, a circumstance occurred which wounded me to the very soul. Monsieur D'Albret, the gentleman whom I have lately mentioned as being Ellen's sole companion at the death-bed of her husband, in France, visited us, and was received by my wife with the warmest expressions of gratitude and esteem. This exhibition of kindness

towards him, though I felt it to be perfectly natural, and quite excusable, annoyed me exceedingly. I was vexed that such reminiscences should be awakened just now, when I was requiring entire and unrestricted affection ; but, too proud to let Ellen know my feelings, I met her friend with every attention, and even invited him to spend a few weeks at Hazelton Hall. Much to my regret, he accepted my invitation, and I was obliged to see him a daily guest at my table, and a devoted attendant upon my wife.

At first, I was only disturbed by his presence, lest it should renew old regrets in the mind of Ellen ; but I soon learned to hate him for his own sake. His laughter-loving spirit was so in unison with her cheerful temper, that his domestication with us seemed to restore her to new happiness, and it was not long before the demon of jealousy took full possession of me. Ellen's perfect purity of feeling, her almost childlike ignorance of vice, rendered her totally unsuspecting of my doubts. She never dreamed that her truth could be doubted, and her extreme frankness, on all occasions, seemed a warrant of her unchanging integrity. Trifles, light as air, were magnified by my distempered fancy into evidences of a secret understanding between them, and when I at length detected them conversing with each other across the saloon, by signs, my fury exceeded all bounds of moderation. With a vain attempt at self-command, I demanded an explanation of what I had just witnessed. Ellen laughed out merrily, and began to initiate me into the mysteries of the language of the fingers, used by the deaf mutes, which she had learned while in Paris. But I was in no humor for trifling, and

insisted upon knowing the subject of their secret conversation. With the courtesy of a gentleman, D'Albret proceeded to tell me that it referred only to a proposed excursion for the next day, and had been commenced by my wife, as he presumed, because he had asked her, at the dinner-table, whether she had forgotten the '*silent language*.'

Enraged at this attempt to deceive, (for so I then considered it,) I forgot the duties of hospitality, and gave D'Albret the lie. I received, in return, a violent blow in the face, from the high-spirited Frenchman: For such insults on both sides, there was but one mode of satisfaction, according to the code of modern honor, and I hastened to write a challenge, which was handed to D'Albret by the time he reached the hotel to which he had hurried. Before receiving his reply, I repaired to Ellen's apartment. She was pacing the room with a hurried step as I entered. Her face was pale as marble, but no traces of tears were on her cheeks. Cold, stately, proud, she awaited my questions. She submitted to my inquisition in a manner that amazed me. The most minute details I had remembered, and I now demanded an explanation of them. Every thing was answered in a clear, concise, straight-forward manner, which absolutely compelled my belief. I accused her of infidelity—she denied the charge, and defied me to believe it. I reviled her for want of feeling, and indifference toward me—she bade me remember the conditions of our marriage, and ask myself whether my conduct, since, had been such as to win her affection. Roused to the highest pitch of fury by her coolness, I, at length, poured forth the full tide of my bitterness.

I accused her of receiving D'Albret as a lover ; nay, I dared to tell her it was but a renewal of the intercourse which had been begun at her husband's dying bed ! What ineffable scorn was in her eyes as she turned towards me, exclaiming, "Can you, indeed, be such a wretch as to believe this ? Oh, God ! have I turned from my heart's deep homage to the dead, for such a reptile !" Tears choked her utterance, and she hastened from the room.

About an hour afterward, as I sat in my library, with D'Albret's reply to my challenge lying before me, a note was handed to me, together with a small casket, which had always stood on a table in Ellen's dressing-room, and had often excited my curiosity. The note was as follows :—

"After your investigation of this morning, I am unwilling to leave you in ignorance of any thing that concerns me. You once expressed a wish to know the contents of the casket, and I now send it to you, trusting to your honor for its safe return. It contains letters and other memorials of my dead husband. When I became your wife, I resolved never again to unclothe the lid, as I would not wrong you by a single regret, if self-command could preserve me from such reminiscences, and I have kept my determination. I wish you to understand every thing which, in your mind, may seem to require explanation, and then—we must part for ever.

"I have borne and suffered much from your exacting temper, but there are things which may not be forgiven, and such has been your last offence. You have accused me of a crime at which my whole nature revolts. If you do not believe your own accusation, I must for ever despise you for your impotent malice and falsehood ; but if you really entertained, for a moment, the idea that such guilt was possible to me, there can be no more confidence between us. The child, for whose sake I consented to become your wife, no longer exists to form a tie between us, and I now demand a separation as the only amends you can make for the recent outrage upon my feelings."

The perfect indifference evinced by this cold letter, almost maddened me, but I had too much important business to transact within the next few hours, to yield myself up to passion. At daybreak I was to meet D'Albret, and all my worldly affairs were to be arranged previous to that time. I believe I was endued with supernatural calmness that night. I made my will, bequeathing all my fortune to Ellen, and left a letter in the hands of my old servant, who witnessed the former paper, to be delivered to her in case I fell. This letter, while it exonerated her from the serious charge which my blind jealousy had brought against her, yet breathed the bitter reproaches of one who felt himself wronged in his affections.

After I had completed my arrangements, I threw open my window, and sat down beside it to cool my fevered brow. A faint streak of light was visible in the horizon, and I watched it gradually flushing into dawn, until I knew that my hour was come. At that moment my second tapped at my door, and in perfect silence, in order not to arouse the household, we stole down stairs. We reached the appointed place some time before my antagonist, and when the morning sun issued from his gorgeous chamber of golden clouds, I was lying on the greensward with a bullet in my body. I was convinced that I had wronged D'Albret, and I had, therefore, resolved to fire my pistol in the air ; but he had the first fire, and his ball entering my side, glanced down upon the hip joint ; thus missing a vital part, but rendering me a cripple for life.

I was carried home insensible, and for many weeks I remained a suffering invalid, during which time, Ellen

attended me with unwearied diligence. Her light foot was ever gliding about the apartment, while she stilled every sound, and ministered to my every want; her soft hand bathed my feverish temples, and moistened my parched lips. Kindness and gentleness characterized every action, but, alas! there was no tenderness. She did for me just what she would have done for any suffering friend, but she felt not that she was watching over the beloved husband. My attempts to win back the confidence of former days, were repelled gently but firmly; and my heart fainted beneath the painful thought that henceforth we were to be as strangers to each other.

As soon as I had quite recovered my health, and was able to leave my room by the aid of the staff which I was henceforth to require for the rest of my life, Ellen pleaded ill health as a reason for seeking change of air. Confinement to my sick chamber, had certainly paled her cheek, and I could not oppose her departure. Before she left me, however, we held a long and painful conversation. She assured me that it was utterly impossible for her ever again to consider herself my wife; she forgave me from her heart, but I had outraged her feelings so severely, that she could no longer regard me with the friendship and confidence which should always characterize the intercourse of married life. She implored me, as the only reparation I could now make, to let her choose her own abode and to leave her unmolested. "We both require change of air," said she; "let us, therefore, separate to seek for health on different shores; we will thus avoid the fracas of a public separation; the world may surmise, but can never

know the truth, if we keep our own counsel, and I shall thus be spared much humiliation."

Bitter were my struggles before I could accede to her wishes, but in the solitude of my sick chamber, I had been taught to look into the depths of my own heart, and I had learned a lesson of forbearance. When I gazed on her care-worn brow, I felt that I did, indeed, owe her some amends, and yielding to the impulse of my better nature, I consented to her proposal.

Ten years have elapsed since then ; my wound has rendered me very lame, and a residence in the South of France is considered necessary to my health. My wife still remains at home, and I am thus lingering out the remnant of my days in utter loneliness. My hair is silvered with the frosts of age, and time has somewhat tamed the violence of my feelings. I am still peevish and irritable, still the torment of my servants, and the terror of a card-table ; but I can now look back to past scenes with bitter self-reproach. I can now do full justice to the noble virtues and matchless affection of my sainted Maria, and I can also appreciate the less gifted character and sunny temper of my wronged Ellen. Both are lost to me for ever, and it was with my domestic happiness in manhood, as with my toys in boyhood, only valued when too late. I am conscious that the happiness of two estimable women has been sacrificed to my discontent and petulant temper, and while I weep over the early grave of one, I pine to look once more upon the face of the other.

Let no man indulge his faults of temper, and console himself with the belief that he injures no one but himself. Let him remember that he is one of a circle

of friends, or children, or dependents, all of whom must suffer more or less from his errors. Let him bethink himself how,

“In a moment, we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul, turn all our blood to tears,
And color things to come, with hues of night ;

and as he ponders over the weakness of humanity, let him seek the aid of that Power which alone can say to the tide of passion, “Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be staid.”

THE END.









